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The Just Price and the Costs of Production According to St. Thomas Aquinas

by Desire Barath

FOR YEARS HISTORIANS of economic thought have maintained that St. Thomas had proposed a cost of production theory of the just price, in which production costs represented mainly or only wages just sufficient to allow producers or traders to live in a manner befitting their status in society.[1] The purpose of this paper is to show that this interpretation is inaccurate and leads to false impressions regarding the nature of Thomas' approach to problems of market value.

Writers claiming that Thomas argued for equality between the just price and the average costs of production would have to look chiefly in his *Commentary on the Ethics* for evidence to support their contention. In this work Thomas deals with the problem of the just value of artifacts or reproducible goods in relation to outlay and reward for the artisans' effort.

The discussion of the just price in the *Commentary on the Ethics* starts with a brief study of reciprocation (*contrapassum*) which is considered as the proportioning of punishment to crime and, by implication, of reward to service.[2] The signifi-

[1] See E. Roll, *A History of Economic Thought* (New York, 1958) p. 46; R. L. Meek, *Studies in the Labor Theory of Value* (London, 1956) pp. 13-14; L. H. Haney, *History of Economic Thought* (New York, 1949) pp. 99-100; A. Grey, *Development of Economic Doctrines* (London, 1948) p. 51; E. Whittaker, *A History of Economic Ideas* (New York, 1947) pp. 410-412; H. R. Sewall, *The Theory of Value before Adam Smith* (Publications of the American Economic Association, 3rd Series, Vol. II, No. 3) p. 122.

[2] *In V Eth.*, 8 (*passim*). In Thomas' theory of justice, exchange justice is the virtue regulating conduct in all areas of activity in which, roughly speaking, something is due to a private person by reason of his action. Exchange justice owes its name to the fact that its most precise application is found in the voluntary exchange of commodities.

cance of reciprocation regarding the determination of value is brought out in a statement affirming that just rates of exchange call for reciprocation in exchanges among craftsman like the builder and the cutler, whose products are different in kind and embody different degrees of effort and different amounts of outlay.[3] In an uncommonly difficult language, what Thomas intends to say here, at least in part, is that artisans should exchange their products in quantities that are inversely proportional to their wages and expenses per unit of their output.[4] The shoemaker, he writes, should give as many more shoes in return for a house or for a measure of food as the labor and expenses necessary to build a house or to produce a measure of food exceed those needed to make a shoe. Otherwise the products exchanged would not be equal in value.[5] Should the farmer have to yield more grain for a shoe than is implied in reciprocation, he would not be fully recompensed for his effort and product.[6] To expect the farmer or any other artisan to continue to produce and exchange on disadvantageous terms would be absurd. In the absence of reciprocation all the arts would be destroyed, because producers would not get in exchanges commodities equivalent to what they produced.[7]

Obscure as are these arguments from the point of view of economics, they imply the equality of the just price and the average costs of production, the latter being made up of outlays and the monetary equivalent of the artisans' labor expended on one unit of output. Nevertheless, there is no direct reference in Thomas' works outside the *Commentary on the Ethics* to cost as a general determinant of the just price. Although in some

[3] *In V Eth.*, 8, n. 972.

[4] *Ibid.*, n. 976.

[5] "Oportet igitur ad hoc quod sit justa commutatio, ut tanta calceamenta dentur pro una domo vel pro cibo unius hominis, quantum aedificator vel agricola excedit coriarium in labore et expensis." *Ibid.*, 9, n. 980.

[6] *Ibid.*, n. 983.

[7] *Ibid.*, 8, n. 977; 9, n. 980.

texts sellers are allowed to dispose of their stock for more than what was paid for it if their purpose is recovery of all outlays prudently made, the prices of goods are assumed to depend on market conditions.[8] The obligation to observe reciprocation is restated, but in the later formulations of this rule references to labor and expenses of production are omitted until only the "equalization" of what is given and received by a person in exchanges is stressed. In the *Summa Theologiae* reciprocation is defined in such a way that it may be fulfilled by the exchange of commodities in inverse ratio to their market prices.[9]

This change in emphasis, if not in point of view, in Thomas' arguments is not surprising. Besides cost, Thomas had always recognized need or usefulness (*utilitas*) as a determinant of value. Moreover, in his later analyses of exchange relations increasing attention is paid to the influence of scarcity in value formation.

Oddly enough, Thomas considered the role of need in valuation most extensively in his *Commentary on the Ethics* in the course of his exposition of the principle of reciprocation. In this context the occasion for raising the problem of need is furnished by an inquiry into the foundation of the commensurability of goods and services in value determination.

Thomas, like Aristotle, on whose *Ethics* he comments, was struck by the fact that in the process of valuation all things are measured on a common scale. How can we compare, he asks, diverse kinds of things, which are incommensurable in terms of their physical features?[10] The relative excellence of different things, he reasons, does furnish a basis for ranking them in an order from the metaphysical point of view. In exchanges, however, things are not valued according to their dignity or the

[8] *De emptione et venditione ad tempus* (Opusculum LX). *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 4.

[9] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 61, 4; *In II Pol.*, 1.

[10] *In V Eth.*, 9, n. 989.

excellence of their nature. If they were, a mouse, which is a sentient, living being, would always be priced higher than a pearl, which is inanimate.[11] For purposes of exchange, things are valued in terms of money, but on examination, money turns out to be only a proximate conventional measure. This is shown by the possibility of exchanges at definite rates under conditions of barter.[12]

For Thomas the first clue to the ultimate or natural measure of commodities is found in what he assumes to be a historical fact: the introduction of money for making the exchange of the *necessary* means of life convenient.[13] Exchange takes place, he argues, only if each of two persons needs what the other has. If people would not need anything, there would be no exchange, and if their needs would be different from what they are, entirely different things would be exchanged, because people would not give things they need for things they do not need.[14] From considerations of this sort he concludes that need (*indigentia*) is the natural and universal measure of all things for purposes of exchange.[15] This, he states, is proven also by the fact that people price things according as they need them, paying as much for them as they estimate them to be worth.[16]

There is no doubt that Thomas considered need as the fundamental determinant of value. This is clear enough from his arguments, although he seems to be preoccupied with the question of the commensurability of commodities. He speaks of need as a measure, but if he uses the term measure to denote

[11] *Ibid.*, n. 981.

[12] *Ibid.*, n. 982, 989, 990.

[13] *Ibid.*, n. 982.

[14] *Ibid.*, n. 982, 985.

[15] ". . . hoc autem unum quod omnia mensurat secundum rei veritatem est indigentia, quae continet omnia commutabilia, inquantum omnia referuntur ad humanam indigentiam." *Ibid.*, n. 981.

[16] ". . . rebus pretia imponuntur secundum quod homines indigent eis ad usum suum" *Ibid.* ". . . quantum aliquis aestimat rem, tanti emit eam." *In IX Eth.*, 1, n. 1770.

a counter, he also uses it to signify a principle or cause. By the time he completes his reasoning about commensurability, he makes need not only the principle of the measurability of commodities and the source of their value but also the cause of the magnitude of their value. According to his position, if that which is more valuable is not that which is more perfect, it must be that which is more necessary.

Statements about the dependence of value on need reappear in the *Summa* in which notions of usefulness and buyers' and sellers' surplus are implied in a number of arguments concerning rates of exchange. In the *Summa* commodities are described once again as useful objects whose value depends on their usefulness, not on the excellence of their nature.[17] In a note on possible differences between the value of natural and artificial gold, pure gold is considered to remain more valuable as long as it remains more useful or capable of satisfying a greater variety of important needs.[18] An understanding of the principle of exchange is revealed in a statement in which voluntary

[17] ". . . pretium rerum venalium non consideratur secundum gradum naturae, cum quandoque pluris vendatur unus equus quam unus servus; sed consideratur secundum quod res in usum hominis venit." *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 2 ad 3. *Usus* and *utilitas* are rendered by usefulness instead of utility in this paper, because Thomas regards use as being a moral act in the ultimate analysis. See Note 40 below.

According to Schumpeter, "St. Thomas recognized, as coming within the concept of his just price, the element of the subjective value of an object to the seller though not the element of the subjective value to the object to the buyer." J. A. Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis* (New York, 1954) p. 93. This interpretation by Schumpeter rests on a confused generalization drawn apparently from Thomas' discussion of a special problem concerning the legitimacy of selling a unit of commodity for more than the going price if a person is willing, by reason of emergency or ignorance, to pay more for it than the going price. In dealing with this problem Thomas assumes the price as given and known to the seller and argues only about the extent to which a single seller may lawfully depart from the prevailing price under similar circumstances. In his solution he forbids the seller to ask for more than the going price, but permits him to receive compensation from the buyer for objectively determinable losses incidental to the sale. Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 1.

[18] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 2 ad 1.

exchanges are regarded as being advantageous to buyers as well as to sellers owing to the mutual needs which they have for one another's products.[19] For Thomas the essential role of exchange justice appears to be the preservation of common or mutual advantages in exchanges. Discrimination is rejected by him as unjust on the ground that it would result in the seizure of the buyer's advantage by the seller through price increases or of the seller's advantage by the buyer through decreases in price.[20]

But the attribution of preeminence to need among value determinants did not lead in Thomas' writings to an attempt to derive the market price from the usefulness of commodities to individuals.[21] For purposes of valuation need is assumed to be the normal needs of a community, and it is implied in Thomas' arguments that to account for the prevailing price of a commodity the only additional information needed is the knowledge of whether that commodity is scarce or plentiful. Thus, the high price of gold is attributed to its unusually great usefulness as well as to its scarcity, scarcity being considered only as a feature of supply.[22]

It is important to note that the word scarcity is not used by Thomas to refer to the supply conditions of rare objects only. On the contrary, the terms scarcity and plenty are used by him to describe changing levels of supply that result in price fluctuations. In the *Politics* commodities of all sorts, especially minerals and agricultural products, are said to be scarce and

[19] *Ibid.*, 77, 1.

[20] *Ibid.*, 58, 12 ad 1; 77, 1.

[21] In his remarks about the advantages of exchange Thomas did not go beyond pointing to the needs of marketers for each other's wares and emphasizing the importance of a single price system. He distinguished, however, between the exchange value of commodities and their varying usefulness to different individuals, and expected total usefulness to serve as a basis for reciprocation only among friends. He was not aware of marginal processes in valuation. See *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 1.

[22] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 2 ad 1; *In I Pol.*, 7.

dear or plentiful and cheap in different places and in different times.[23] In the *Summa* varying degrees of scarcity and the corresponding fluctuations in prices are expressed as changes in prices with changes of place and time.[24]

Thomas does not discuss in detail the causes of variations in supply, but he makes references to seasonal and cyclical changes in the supply of agricultural products. He associates cyclical changes with crop cycles governed by stellar influences.[25]

The idea of changes in supply and of fluctuations in prices forms the basis of Thomas' conception and justification of profits from trade. The connection between variations in supply and profit making is clearly stated in the *Politics*, where it is said that, for purposes of profit making, people should know when and where commodities are plentiful and cheap and when and where they are scarce and dear in order to buy in times and places of plenty and to sell in those of scarcity.[26] In the *Summa* the moral justification of the trader's profit rests in part on the concept of the changeability of value by reason of which the trader escapes the charge of cheating or of selling

[23] ". . . homo sit expertus circa bona hujusmodi, quae ab hominibus possidentur, quae eorum sunt maximi pretii, et ubi maximo pretio venduntur, et quomodo, puta quo tempore, vel secundum alias conditiones. . . . Oportet autem eum, qui ex his vult lucrari pecuniam, esse expertum quae eorum sint maxime cara, et in quibus locis; qua alia istorum in aliis regionibus abundant; ut scilicet emat in loco ubi abundant, et vendat in loco ubi sunt cara." *In I Pol.*, 9; see also *De Regimine Principum*, II, 2; *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 3 ad 4 and obj. 4.

[24] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 4 ad 2. Thomas did not identify the quantity of a commodity supplied at a given price in a given area with the quantity of that commodity produced in the given area and earmarked for sale. As suggested by some of his statements already considered, he saw that some producers would dispose of their product in areas where the price happened to be higher. He realized also that some persons would wait for higher prices before selling their goods. Cf. *Quodl.*, VI, 14. Likewise, he knew that more of a commodity could be sold at a lower than at a higher price in a given market in a given period of time. Cf. *In I Pol.*, 9.

[25] *In I Pol.*, 9.

[26] See note 23 above.

commodites for more than their value.[27] The dependence of profit on variations in supply is expressed in a passage, in which a concept of competition is implied. In a market, Thomas writes, in which the price is high because of scarcity, anyone may sell at the price he finds there without being obliged to disclose any information he may have of the impending arrival of traders with additional supplies which would lower the price.[28]

In his references to changes in supply, Thomas seems to have in mind the collective or objective aspect of value formation as he does in his discussion of need. Visualizing an economy in which households fill most of their needs through direct production, he considers the market supply of commodities to consist chiefly of the households' superfluities or of the excess of their product over their needs. He is aware of the fact that traders and households influence the market supply and the price through their purchases and sales.[29] However, he regards the price as being *found* and not set by an individual buyer or seller. Within the limits of the rudimentary way in which he handles market problems, his concept of the just price could be characterized as that of a competitive price.[30]

In his remarks about changing prices and profits, Thomas reasons in terms of a concept of the just price which is not necessarily that of a cost price. The obvious question is what

[27] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 4.

[28] *Ibid.*, 77, 3 ad 4.

[29] *Ibid.* Thomas saw that a bumper crop would bring low prices and losses to farmers in a region unless part of the crop could be sold elsewhere. See *De Regimine Principum* II, 2.

[30] In the *Commentary on the Politics* Thomas refers to the profitability of monopoly in the form of a corner on the market. Since he does not condemn monopoly practices, it could be claimed that monopoly price represents in his writings another instance of the just price which is not a cost price. But apart from faint, indirect suggestions of discrimination and of a comparatively slower rate of sales, Thomas' conception of monopoly implies only speculation and the replacement of many sellers by one. Cf. *In I Pol.*, 9.

are we to think of the apparent identification of the just price with a cost price in the *Commentary on the Ethics.*

One could argue that in the *Commentary on the Ethics* Thomas was moving in the direction of a concept of normal cost price, reflecting a long run correspondence between the decisions of buyers and those of producers and sellers. His buyers are assumed to take a commodity for the price asked for it only if they consider it worth that price. On the other hand, in the field of artifacts (reproducible goods) producers are said to refuse to supply their products except at prices sufficient to cover their outlays and to reward them for their effort. In the same context, however, in which these ideas are discussed, there is a reference to the changeability of prices and the consequent inability of producers to get always as much for their products as they wish.[31] Apparently, producers are not supposed to lay down their tools in the face of short period disappointments.

It is possible to point to similar assumptions in Thomas' reasoning in the *Commentary on the Politics* and in the *Summa.* Invariably, he visualizes trade as the movement of goods from points of plenty to those of scarcity.[32] As we have seen, he knows that increases in supply lower the price in a market. In the expression of such ideas and in some statements, in which he stresses the variability and unpredictability of profit,[33] he appears to assume the operation of market forces leading to a price just sufficient to cover costs.

Quite simply, then, the question of the relation of the just price to the costs of production in Thomas' works can be cleared up in terms of his arguments implying that the just price has

[31] "Verum est autem quod etiam denarius patitur hoc idem quod aliae res, quod scilicet non semper pro eo accipit homo quod vult, quia non semper potest aequale, idest non semper est ejusdem valoris. . . . *In V Eth.*, 9, n. 987.

[32] *In I Pol.*, 9; *De Regimine Principum* II, 3. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 3.

[33] *In IV Sent.*, d. 15, q. 1, a. 5, qa. 4 ad 4. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 78, 2 ad 1.

long as well as short-period aspects. In the light of some of his statements and in view of certain trends in his reasoning, it is not unreasonable to assume that he believed in the tendency of prices to equal production costs in the long run. At the same time, however, it should also be admitted that he noted the inevitability of changes in supply and the consequent fluctuations of the market price around the normal cost price. He justified departures from the cost price apparently on the ground that changes in supply would call for changes in price to apportion equitably the benefits and burdens of exchanges among buyers and sellers. At any rate, the essential element in his concept of the just price is not equality between price and production cost but the balancing of the advantages of exchange.[34]

In interpreting Thomas' notion of the just price, the importance of a distinction between what amounts to long- and short-run considerations in his treatment of value problems should not be overlooked. In current literature on Thomas, the failure to take into account this distinction has led to endless confusion. As experience shows, preoccupation with the idea of a cost price in his writings is bound to lead to the conclusion that he did not allow the just price in any situation to exceed the costs of production or to fall below them. Once his just price is identified with a cost price, it becomes also necessary to disregard his references to fluctuations of rates of exchange and to deny his "willingness" to entrust the determination of the just price to markets.[35] Then with the markets eliminated from consideration in his interpretation, his concept of profit will have to be explained as implying nothing more than payment for labor service, compensation for risk, or a negligible arbitrary margin above costs.

Owing to the longstanding nature of misconceptions regard-

[34] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 1.
[35] See, e. g., Roll, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

ing Thomas' idea of the determination of the just price, it may not be out of place here to emphasize that if anything is obvious in his treatment of exchange problems it is his recognition of the variability of value. In all his works, including the *Commentary on the Ethics,* in which he raises value problems, he refers directly to price fluctuations without ever suggesting that changes in value effected by a concourse of buyers and sellers should have nothing to do with just prices. The only thing he says about market prices is that an individual should follow them in buying and selling and in estimating debts incurred in transactions. He refers to organized markets only once in his writings, but even in the complete absence of any such reference, it would seem to be unreasonable to interpret his statements about price changes, especially about those changes which he explicitly links with supply changes, as a sign of his unfamiliarity with markets or of his intention to exclude market processes from his scheme for the formation of the just price.[36]

No one would deny that Thomas uses *lucrum* to denote an almost endless variety of income receipts, including what he considers as superfluous income, gains from cheating, and the earnings of any factor of production in unusually remunerative employments. He gives, however, a sufficiently clear indication of his awareness of a contingent type of income or loss depending on price variations and on the shrewdness of sellers or traders.[37] His use of the term *lucrum* in a wide analogical sense does not appear to arise from his intention to reduce profit to wage or to compensation for costs incurred. On the contrary, it seems to be the result of his tendency to see elements of gain —receipts out of proportion to effort, costs or other sacrifices— in all kinds of income under certain conditions.

It should not be assumed, either, that the predominance of

[36] *De emptione et venditione ad tempus* (*Opusculum* LX). *In V Eth.*, 9, n. 987; *In I Pol.*, 9; *Quodl.*, VI, 14; *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 3 ad 4.

[37] See note 33 above; cf. *In III Sent.*, d. 34, q. 1, a. 1, sol.

the ethical point of view in Thomas' analysis of exchange is an indication of his rejection of competitive market mechanisms as instruments in the determination of just prices and rates of profit.

For him, it is true, a change of price is a necessary but not a sufficient moral ground for an individual to sell a commodity for more than what he paid for it if his purpose is profit making. If deliberate profit making is to be approved by him, two other conditions are to be met. First, the acquisition of profit and the use of acquired profit are to be put in the service of honorable individual and social goals, such as the marketing of useful commodities, the support of the family and the aiding of the poor. Second, the profit maker is to exercise moderation in the use of his time and energy for profit making, since indulgence is immoral.[38]

This concept of the moral status of profit implies some sort of limitation in the pursuit of profit. What it condemns, however, is only profit sought as an end in itself or as a means to illegitimate ends. It does not call either for the reduction of profit-making to insignificant proportions or for the elimination of impersonal market forces from the formation of just prices and rates of profit. Within the framework of his justification of profit-making, Thomas approved of buying in cheap markets and selling in dear markets at prevailing prices. In fact, he recognized that profit-seeking under competitive conditions would lead to improvement in the economic positions not only of sellers but also of buyers.[39]

This is not to say that Thomas looked upon competition as the sufficient condition of justice in exchanges. That he did

[38] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 4.

[39] An exception is to be made in the case of interest which Thomas regards as a result of fraud and rejects as inherently unjust. Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 78, 1. As regards commodities, he condemns buying cheap and selling dear only if they involve cheating. See *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 1 ad 2.

not do so is obvious from his arguments about profit and from his concept of usefulness and exchange justice.

According to him the proper usefulness of things consists in their use as means to assist man on his journey through natural life to eternal happiness.[40] Unless economic activity is qualified by the demands of supernatural destiny, perfect justice in exchanges is impossible, because the very purpose of the just price is to promote the common good which in its specific aspect is moral and spiritual well-being. Disorder in the appetitive faculties, issuing in improper desires and satisfactions, would lead to a price structure which would be regarded from the standpoint of exchange justice as distorted even if determined in perfectly competitive markets, free from fraud.

Although Thomas' position implies the justifiability of price control, his delineation of the general features of the just price is based on the concept of free exchanges among persons whose needs are properly ordered. His theory of the just price was certainly not meant to be a set of rules for price fixing by authority. He considered justice in exchanges to rest on the conscience and conduct of private persons, and thought that public authority could do no more regarding rates of exchange than to eliminate from transactions the more obvious kinds of abuse which threaten the foundations of society. In his judgment legislative action, even when inspired by the desire to foster the common good, was far too crude to secure the ideals of the just price.[41]

It is possible that some writers who assert that Thomas had little or no use for free markets intend to say only that he did not consider the ends sought by sellers and buyers to be a matter of indifference. But if this is all that is claimed, it would be better to say that Thomas, unlike economists who take ends for granted, undertook to give definite directions to needs and

[40] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, 16, 3; *De Malo*, XV, 2 ad 10.
[41] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 1 ad 1.

wants that should underlie the preferences of marketers. By characterizing his position in this manner, confusion between the question of ends and the question of processes of valuation would be avoided in his interpretation.

In discussions in which Thomas is assumed to have equated both the short- and the long-run price with average costs of production it is usually maintained that he defined production costs in relation to living costs. In his theory of the just price, it is argued, the overwhelming portion of production costs is made up of payments for services which represent the remuneration of producers or sellers at rates that would enable them to live in a style sanctioned by tradition for members of their class.

Reasons for the popularity of this interpretation among historians of economic thought are easily found. The idea of the dependence of value on social rank seems to harmonize Thomas' concept of the just price with current notions of medieval attitudes towards economic inequalities and class distinctions. In the same breath, this idea promises to fulfill the understandable desire to find in Thomas' writings a consistent and integral cost of production theory of value in which even cost has a beginning and factor prices are also explained in terms of costs. Furthermore, the *Summa* contains some passages in which the concept of the just price appears to be linked with that of social position.

Unfortunately for this interpretation, however, Thomas' works contain also texts in which social position is rejected as a necessary element in just valuation. In the passages that could conceivably be quoted in support of a status theory of value the terms of settlement in matters governed by exchange justice are seemingly made to depend on class distinction.[42]

[42] ". . . in actionibus et passionibus conditio personae facit ad quantitatem rei; major enim est injuria si percutiatur princeps quam si percutiatur privata persona. Et ideo conditio personae in distributiva justitia at-

Yet in other texts it is clearly affirmed that the price of a commodity or service has nothing to do with considerations of whether the seller is rich or poor.[43]

The explanation of this apparent contradiction is that Thomas did not include status among the determinants of the just price, but he considered it as a factor in the regulation of some areas of human relations outside voluntary exchanges. Whenever he deals with the exchange of commodities, he mentions status only to deny to it a role in value formation. At the same time, in those passages in his works in which he affirms the influence of status he deals only with problems of just punishment for assault and battery which he considers to be a crime varying in seriousness with the dignity of the victim.[44]

Even if Thomas had regarded status as a necessary element in the determination of the just price, it would be wrong to assign a cost concept of value to him on that account. According to a theory of value that could be derived from his remarks about striking people, value would have to be proportioned to the dignity of the producer's person or service and not to his cost of living. But even if correctly formulated, a status theory

tenditur secundum se, et in commutativa autem secundum quod per hoc diversificatur res." *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 61, 2 ad 3; *ibid.*, 63, 4 ad 3; 58, 10 ad 3.

Whittaker's interpretation of the text quoted above suffers, among other things, from his confusion of Thomas' concept of distributive justice with the economist's notion of distribution. Cf. Whittaker, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

[43] ". . . sed in justitia non variatur medium secundum diversas personae conditiones, sed attenditur solum ad quantitatem rei. Qui enim emit rem aliquam, debet tantum solvere quantum valet, sive a paupere sive a divite emat. Reddere autem debitum est actus justitiae; et ideo ad hoc quod alicui reddatur quod ei debetur, non refert utrum sit dives vel pauper." *Quodl.*, II, 2. Cf. *In V Eth.*, 8, n. 969.

[44] See note 42 above. In Thomas' terminology the status of the assaulted person has a direct (*per se*) influence on the magnitude of the *actio* (attack) and of the *passio* (punishment) of the attacker. In the case of voluntary exchanges Thomas also refers to the giving and receiving of commodities as *actio* and *passio*, but emphasizes that these terms can be applied to voluntary exchanges in an analogical sense only. Cf. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 61, 4.

of the just price has no foundation in Thomas' concept of valuation. In denying the dependence of just rates of exchange on dignity taken in the metaphysical sense, he denied its dependence on any particular kind of rank.[45]

Thomas uses a concept of *conditio et status personarum* extensively in many of his ethical arguments but not in those relating to just valuation. With regard to economic problems, he refers to the requirements of status as a rough measure of that part of one's income that one should retain for purposes of consumption by one's family.[46] It is idle to contend that he advocated the limitation of private income and wealth to what is necessary to maintain fixed socially approved standards of living. Although he did not develop a definite concept of capital [47] and did not argue in favor of accumulation for purposes of production, he condemned only extreme solicitude in wealth getting which would result in the neglect of the moral and spiritual goals of life.[48] In many of his statements he took for granted the moral freedom of individuals to improve their economic condition and acknowledged the importance of accumulating private wealth for promoting social, moral and religious causes.[49] He did not argue for setting predetermined limits to private income and wealth. He was concerned only with the question of the legitimacy of ends sought in economic activities and the proportioning of acquisitions to the legitimate ends served.[50]

It should be observed also that Thomas' statements about cost and remuneration do not warrant the assumption that the

[45] See note 11 above.

[46] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 32, 5 ad 3; 32, 6.

[47] Naturally, Thomas knew of the need for funds in trade and of the traders' effort to keep their funds intact. Cf. *De emptione et venditione ad tempus* (Opusculum, LX).

[48] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 55, 6; 55, 7; 188, 7. *De Malo*, XIII, 4 ad 3.

[49] *In V Eth.*, 7, n. 723; IX, 8, n. 1853; *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 129, 8; 186, 3; 188, 7.

[50] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 77, 4.

only cost he tended to recognize was labor cost. In the *Commentary on the Ethics,* it is true, he used labor and expenses interchangeably. But even in this work, he referred also to labor and expenses jointly. In addition, he expressed familiarity with the concept of rental as the price paid for the use of land and of produced durable goods.[51] In the *Summa* he virtually over-emphasized the productivity of land and stressed the right of landowners to compensation for the use of their property.[52] Since in his time agriculture was the dominating art and most of the commodities mentioned in his discussion of value are agricultural products, it is unjustifiable to assume that he saw only labor costs in production costs.

It is, however, useless to look in Thomas' work for a clear-cut idea of what determines the value of factor services. In some instances he described wage and rental as prices subject to the demands of exchange justice, suggesting that wage and rental should be explained in terms of the same sorts of elements as the prices of products.[53] But there is nothing in his arguments to show that he had progressed in this line of reasoning to the point where the importance of settling the question of factor pricing in the explanation of value could be recognized. The fact is that he failed to raise in his writings the problem of relations between factor and product pricing and did not succeed in treating unambiguously cost and price relationships even in the *Commentary on the Ethics,* in which he stressed the part played by cost in reciprocation. In some of his statements cost is assumed to be the criterion of justice in exchanges, but in other statements this role is filled by the value of the product, which is then referred to need.[54]

Much in what Thomas has to say about value reflects com-

[51] *In V Eth.*, 8, nn. 972, 976; 9, n. 980; 4, n. 929.
[52] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, 61, 3; 78, 3; 87, 2 ad 2. Cf. *De Malo*, XIII, 4.
[53] *In III Sent.*, d. 33, q. 3, a. 4, qa. 6 ad 2. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, 114, 1.
[54] *In V Eth.*, 8, nn. 976, 977.

mon-sense observations rather than conscious theorizing. He glimpsed the complexity of the problem of rates of exchange as evidenced by the variety of issues he noted in his discussion of the formation of the just price. From the point of view of economic analysis, however, his arguments are incomplete and his idea of the relationships between the determinants of value is left undeveloped.

Nevertheless, it is possible to trace in Thomas' statements the outline of a rudimentary cost of production concept of market value without making elaborate assumptions to bridge gaps in his reasoning. It may be said, therefore, that he approached the problem of the determination of the just price in terms of production costs, provided nothing more is meant by cost than this term signifies in common usage, and the presence of both short- and long-run considerations in his arguments is recognized. But an account of his concept of the just price would not be complete without pointing out that, according to his position, the ultimate test of the moral correctness of prices is found in their correspondence to the needs of the people. In fact, in its fundamental plan, his doctrine of the just price bears a closer analogy to subjective than to objective theories of value.

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St. Thomas and the Definition of Active Potency

by James E. Royce, S.J.

"AN ACTIVE POTENCY is a principle of acting on another precisely as other," says St. Thomas in the second book of the *Summa contra Gentiles,* chapter 7, and the same formula appears frequently in his works when treating of the notion of an active potency. But must an active potency always have an object, an "other"? And if so, what must be said about immanently active powers, which by definition would seem not to act upon another but upon the agent? Do cognitive and appetitive potencies act upon another as other? Again, if this is the formal definition of active potency in St. Thomas, will it imply that God's must have an object?

His doctrine about God is clear enough, but his treatment there hardly clarifies the question of his general definition of active potency. Nor does an investigation of the many places where he discusses immanent and transeunt activity settle the question of whether an active potency is formally such that it is operative on another if it is at the same time an immanently active power. His examples are all of transeunt action when he explains active potency. True, he uses time and time again the example from Aristotle of the doctor who cures himself, but that is not very helpful as he merely explains, like the Philosopher, that the physician as physician is acting, yet is acted upon (passive) not as physician but as the one being healed (patient); since this is a distinction of reason and the physician as patient is not really *"other,"* no real solution is reached.[1]

[1] Cf. for example his commentary *In V Meta.*, 15, n. 955, where he says that this is "per accidens"—not too helpful when the attempt is to determine a formal definition.

An interesting solution appears if we look closely into the text of Aristotle, from whom St. Thomas borrowed bodily, or at least thought he did, this definition of active potency. Aristotle certainly intended to lay down a real definition, for in one of the many places where he gives what St. Thomas copied he explicitly states, "Therefore the proper definition of the primary kind of potency [i. e., active potency] will be. . . ."[2] But what did he say? The version of Aristotle given us by Cathala[3] is that which William of Moerbeke made at the request of St. Thomas himself, and which the latter evidently used in writing his commentary.[4] Now a comparison of this text, which we shall presume was the one St. Thomas had at hand, with other versions reveals an enlightening difference. In each of three places where St. Thomas comments upon Aristotle's definition of active potency, the text of Aristotle's definition which Aquinas had reads "principium mutationis in aliud inquantum aliud est" or the equivalent, in short the definition quoted at the beginning of this essay.[5] Thus it is clear that St. Thomas thought he was copying Aristotle verbatim, and so he was according to the text he had. But although the Bekker edition (both Berlin and Oxford) gives the Greek as William of Moerbeke translated it, the critical apparatus in these and similar places gives the variant ἢ ᾗ ("aliud *vel qua* aliud") for Bekker's simple ᾗ, from several codices. Hence, if we turn to the Oxford translation (the *Metaphysics* as rendered into English by W. D. Ross himself) we are confident that there is considerable justification for the translation "source of change in another thing or in the same thing *qua* other." The point to notice of course is that the words "or

[2] *Meta.*, V, 12, 1020a5.

[3] *In Metaphysicam Aristotelis Commentaria*, ed. M.-R. Cathala, O. P., rev. R. M. Spiazzi, O. P. (Turin, 1950), Introductio, p. xxiii.

[4] Cf. De Rubeis, "Dissertatio 23," c. 2, in *Opera S. Thomae*, ed. Leonine I, celxi.

[5] *Meta.*, IX, 1, 1046a11; *Meta.*, V, 12, 1019a16; and *ibid.*, 1020a5.

in the same thing" never appear in the text St. Thomas used, nor does he ever use a phrase like "in alio *vel in ipso* inquantum aliud est" as he might have, had he seen the variant codices listed by Bekker.

This curious fact may perhaps explain somewhat the obscurity of St. Thomas on this subject when he treats it elsewhere in his works. If his text of Aristotle had read like the version Ross has chosen, would be have been clearer and more explicit in his explanation of the term or object of immanently active potencies? And would he have been content to take Aristotle's example of the physician curing himself when discussing the question of immanent operation? We do not know, but a study of some passages may serve to confirm the conjecture, and incidentally also to justify the choice Ross made of manuscripts when translating.

But first we must decide whether our immanently active powers are active or passive potencies. For when Aquinas treats of man's full panoply of powers in a cursory fashion, for example in the two *Summas,* he asserts that the nutritive powers are active, the sensory powers passive, and the intellect is passive except for the action of the agent intellect (which is not really cognition anyway). This might lead the unwary to conclude that, since our cognitive powers are passive for St. Thomas, the formal definition of an active potency had nothing to do with them, and thus our prize example of immanent activity would be outside the problem under investigation. Besides being opposed to those places where Aquinas clearly makes cognition the act of a *potentia activa* (note 17 *infra*), this much too easy solution leads to the rather unusual position that cognition is *purely* passive, which seems contrary to our whole idea of any vital operation. Indeed, in this view it would be difficult to see why it should be called an (immanent) *activity* at all.

That cognition could be totally passive is first of all contrary to the principle of causality, for a material object could not be

the adequate cause of cognition which is at least somehow immaterial and must therefore result at least partially from the action of the cognitive potency.[6]

If we examine those places where Aquinas treats of such matters more technically and in greater detail than when merely summing up man's powers, we find at once that he by no means intends to deny that our cognition is active, vital, a real operation. In his *De Anima* he makes the *passio* of our cognitive powers an *operatio*,[7] and in his commentary on Aristotle's psychology he asserts that sensation, even though it be a *passio*, is nonetheless an *operatio*,[8] going on to explain how this apparent contradiction can be reconciled.[9] In the next lecture he states that the operation of sensation is a *passio* only less properly so-called, because it is rather a reception than a corruption.[10] When he distinguishes sense as a passive rather than an active potency, therefore, he by no means thereby excludes operation from it, for by that norm all vital potencies are active; he merely wishes to differentiate it from other potencies, e. g., vegetative, by reason of its relation to its object.[11]

The settling of this matter brings us to the heart of the

[6] *Sum. cont. Gent.*, II, 62: "Agens est nobilius patiente, et faciens facto, sicut actus potentia. Quanto autem aliquid est immaterialius, tanto est nobilius. Non potest igitur effectus esse immaterialior sua causa. Omnis autem virtus cognoscitiva, in quantum hujusmodi, est immaterialis. . . ."

[7] *Q. D. De Anima*, 12.

[8] *In II De Anima*, 10, n. 355.

[9] *Ibid.*, n. 356, concluding "therefore to sense is a kind of action."

[10] *Ibid.*, 11, n. 366. Unfortunately, the clearest statement of this doctrine in St. Thomas, and one frequently quoted, is of doubtful genuinity: "Sentire quantum ad ipsum receptionem speciei sensibilis nominat passionem . . . sed quantum ad actum consequentem ipsum sensum perfectum per speciem, nominat operationem" appears in some texts of *In I Sent.*, d. 40, q. 1, a. 1, but is suspected of being an interpolation. Be that as it may, for Aristotle and St. Thomas a potency of the soul is a quality ordained to true operation: *De Pot.*, I, 1, obj. 11 and reply; *Summa Theol.*, I, 77, 1 ad 3; *ibid.*, 78, 3; *ibid.*, 85, 2 ad 3; Aristotle, *Categories*, 8. They both had to assert the role of a passive potency against a theory (like Augustine's) which neglected receptivity and stressed action.

[11] *De Ver.*, XXVI, 3 ad 4.

question, namely, the relation to its object of this immanently operative potency, the power of cognition, which is at once both active and passive. Now St. Thomas says that "the object of the act of a passive potency is as its principle and moving cause . . . that of the act of an active potency is as a term and end." [12] Hence all passive potencies, even those by which inanimate things suffer change, have their object in the sense of that which moves them. So in this sense any cognitive power in so far as it is passive has as its object that which it knows, i. e., that thing which sets it in act from outside.[13] But in so far as it is vitally operative and hence active, it must have a "term and end." St. Thomas is not as explicit on this point as the later scholastics, for he never says clearly what the "term and end" of cognition, as active, is. True, the internal senses [14] and the intellect, outside the beatific vision, from within themselves an express image or word, clearly distinct from the act of cognition.[15] But is this "term" sufficient to satisfy the definition of an active potency as operative on another as other? Though the expressed species is distinct from the active potency itself, can it rightly be called an *aliud*? It is only a quality, an accidental form of the potency; moreover, being a form it should hardly be called an "other" since it is not a *quod* but only a *quo*. It is not another *thing* (supposit), a fact which saves the notion of immanent action [16] but goes hard on the formal definition of active potency with the insistence on other as other. Moreover, if this be the only sense in which cognitive potency

[12] *Summa Theol.*, I, 77, 3; I-II, 1, 3.

[13] *De Ver.*, XXVI, 3 ad 4.

[14] The present writer has found nowhere a clear statement on whether the *sensus communis* forms a *species expressa*. Obviously it does not.

[15] *Quodl.*, V, 9; *De Pot.*, VIII, 1; *Summa Theol.*, I, 85, 2 ad 3.

[16] Perhaps it may be suggested accordingly that much of the dispute between Thomists and Suarezians on the question of how an immanent action can produce a term is futile, since the term is a quality of the agent itself, an intrinsic perfection of the acting power. The writer finds nothing in St. Thomas of the later textbooks' talk about the species being produced "virtualiter," "per quamdam pullulationem," etc.

is active upon another, namely, that it produce an expressed species, what of those instances where there is no *species expressa*—in the external sense, for example, or in the beatific vision? And what about acts of the will, which are likewise immanent activities?

The difficulty is perhaps most apparent in the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, where after explicitly classing vision as the operation of an *active* potency [17] St. Thomas affirms that the term of this action is none other than a perfection of the visual power itself.[18] In this and similar passages in the *Summa* he seems to have forgotten his definition of active potency as a principle of acting upon another precisely as other.

The indication that this apparent inconsistency in St. Thomas would have been removed if he had our text of Aristotle, as Ross translated from the MS. variants, lies in the familiar Thomistic dictum, also borrowed from Aristotle, to the effect that the knower becomes the thing known—something else, an "other," and potentially all things. If we remember that by cognition the knower somehow becomes *aliud*, namely the thing known, and that this intentional union is the essence of cognition for St. Thomas regardless of the production of an expressed species, we seem justified in conjecturing that if his text of Aristotle had given the definition of active potency as "principle of operation on another *or on itself as other*," he would have been more explicit on the relation of this definition to the matter of immanent activity and its object.

The supposition that his version of Aristotle left him unaware of this connection between the definition under discussion and the axiom about the knower becoming the thing known, in view of all the facts so far presented, is confirmed by such texts as this from his commentary on the *Metaphysics*:

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[17] *In IX Meta.*, 8, nn. 1858, 1862.

[18] *Ibid.*, n. 1865; cf. also *Summa Theol.*, I, 56, 1 and I-II, 57, 4.

. . . etsi contingat principium activum esse in eodem cum passo, non tamen secundum quod est idem, sed secundum quod est aliud.[19]

Again, in his commentary on the *De Anima* he explains further how "pati et moveri" are really only improperly applied to sensation, but we have to use them,

et propter hoc sequitur, quod secundum quod patitur a principio, non est similis sensus sentienti; sed secundum quod jam est passum, est assimilatum sensibili, et est tale quale est illud.[20]

This theory that the identification of the knower with the known squares with the alternative reading of Aristotle's definition of active potency to include "*or* itself as other" also seems to be consonant with, and to that extent justified by, those passages in St. Thomas where he says that the proper operation of the will is not only to tend toward another as good, but also to love and enjoy a good when possessed,[21] and that it is in virtue of this fact that we can predicate will of God.[22]

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[19] *In IX Meta.*, 1, n. 1776.
[20] *In II De Anima*, 12, n. 382.
[21] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, 57, 4 and 5 ad 1.
[22] *De Ver.*, XXIII, 1 ad 8um. That God's active potency need not necessarily have an object is clearly put down by St. Thomas early in the *De Pot.* (I, 1 ad 8) because there he has a special point to maintain: "Unde non oportet quod semper [potentia Dei] sit conjuncta effectui, sicut nec quod creaturae fuerint ab aeterno." He really places this whole matter neatly outside the question raised in this paper by reminding us (*De Pot.*, I, 1 ad 13 and ad 15) that when Aristotle states his principles about created active potencies he is not thinking about God, just in case they should not apply. Again, the theory put forth in this paper suggests that Aquinas might have handled the matter a different way.

Saint Thomas and the Aristotelian Metaphysics: Some Observations

by Thomas R. Heath, O.P.

WERNER JAEGER in his fine study of Aristotle includes this fragment of an early Aristotelian dialogue, written at about the same time that the Stagirite was composing the first book of the *Metaphysics*.

> If there were men who had always lived beneath the earth in good and shining habitations, adorned with statues and pictures, and supplied with all the things possessed in abundance by those who are considered happy, and if, however, they had never gone out above the earth, but had heard by rumor and report that there is a certain divine presence and power, and then if at some time the gorges of the earth were opened and they were able to escape out of those hidden places and to come forth into these regions which we inhabit, then when they suddenly saw the earth and the sea and the sky, when they had learned the greatness of the clouds and the power of the winds, when they had gazed on the sun and recognized his greatness, and the beauty and efficacy with which he causes day by spreading his light through the whole sky; when moreover, night having darkened the lands, they perceived the whole sky laid out and adorned with stars, and the variety of the lights of the moon, now waxing, now waning and the risings and the settings of them all, and their courses ratified and immutable to all eternity—when they saw this they would straightway think that there are gods, and that these are the mighty works of the gods.[1]

This fragment has the same sort of pulse that beats in most of the Platonic dialogues, and also it shows a certain dependence on the myth of the cave in Plato's *Republic*. But Jaeger points

[1] W. Jaeger, *Aristotle*, transl. R. Robinson (Oxford, 1948) p. 163.

out that Aristotle approaches the world with a new attitude. The world of sense is not reduced to shadows; and men, though misguided, are not living precisely in caves. They dwell in shining habitations, are modern, cultivated, yet satiated with artificiality, buried, as it were, behind the gadgets in which they seek their happiness. Aristotle has them come up into the light to see the spectacle of nature, "the immeasurable marvel of reality" to see not the invisible Forms of Plato, but the visible world, visible but still unseen by so many men. Aristotle is deliberately recasting the myth of the cave and translating the Forms to the existing structure of the universe. He is the scientist become philosopher, driving men to appreciate the real, actual, existing world, and to see in it the presence of a higher power, directing all things.

Many passages in the *Metaphysics* have this same *élan*.

> Now it is owing to the wonder of the earliest philosophers that men both now begin and first began to philosophize; they wondered originally at the obvious difficulties, then advanced little by little and stated difficulties about the greater matters, e. g., about the phenomena of the moon and those of the sun and the stars and about the genesis of the universe.[2]

The knowledge thus sought for its own sake is called by Aristotle the most divine science and the most honorable, dealing with divine objects, for "God is thought to be among the causes of all things and to be a first principle, and such a science God alone can have or God above all the others."[3]

These things are said in the first book, and then probably after many years of thought on this problem, Aristotle comes to what is perhaps his greatest contribution to philosophy; it appears at the end of the *Metaphysics,* and surely is a marvelous example of the power of naked reason. It is his deepest insight into the nature of the first principle.

[2] *Meta.*, I, 2, 982b15. (Ross translation) [3] *Ibid.*, 983a9.

> If then God is always in that good state in which we sometimes are, this compels our wonder; and if in a better state it compels us yet more. And God is in a better state, and life also belongs to God; for the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality; and God's self-dependent actuality is life most good and eternal. We say, therefore, that God is a living being, eternal, most good, so that life and duration, continuous and eternal, belong to God, for this is God.[4]

Such thought vibrates with life and truth and is related to problems we all share; and the man who worked out the science that could lead us to this insight into reality surely is among the world's greatest thinkers. He is worthy of our study. So thinks Werner Jaeger, W. D. Ross, Richard McKeon, and all the Aristotelian scholars of our day. And what is true now was also true in the time of the medieval scholars, the time of Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. These men were never ashamed of Aristotle; indeed they fought through all kinds of opposition to defend him and to save the body of his thought for posterity. They built their own thoughts with Aristotle's help, penetrated more deeply into the secrets of being, led there by Aristotle, worked out various disputed questions with keys given them by Aristotle; they were aware that Aristotle had not said the last word on everything, but that he had said a good many first words, and so they wrote their commentaries on the Aristotelian books to defend these first words. They never repudiated Aristotle.

A much disputed question has arisen in our day concerning the nature of these commentaries. Do they represent the real thought of the commentators? Are they merely historical documents, that is, are the commentators simply reporting the thought of the Stagirite with no assent or dissent, much as a news broadcaster might report the news without editorializing? The questions has many ramifications. We cannot bring this dispute to any definitive conclusion in this paper. Yet we

[4] *Ibid.*, XII, 7, 1072b24-30.

should like to put down some observations formulated during the reading of the Aristotelian *Metaphysics* and the *Commentary* on that work composed by Thomas Aquinas, observations which we hope will show that this *Commentary* at least is a genuinely Thomistic philosophical document, one which reveals the thought not only of Aristotle but of St. Thomas as well.

Before the opening words of the first book we find an introduction on the nature of the science of metaphysics written by St. Thomas. The tone of this introduction is not that *Aristotle teaches* that metaphysics is such and so, but simply, metaphysics *is* such and so. The text is independent of any particular Aristotelian passage, but coming before the *Metaphysics,* it is certainly an indication of what the reader will find in that book. In other words it is very hard to escape the conclusion that St. Thomas thinks metaphysics is such and so, and that the reader will find an exposition of this in the texts to follow.

What does St. Thomas say in his introduction? A fair summary may be made under seven headings. 1) Metaphysics, since it treats of the most intelligible things, rules and orders the other sciences. In making this point Thomas quotes with approval the *Politics* of Aristotle, and this is the only place in the introduction that the authority of the Philosopher is invoked. 2) The most intelligible things are able to be understood in three ways, as first causes, universal principles, and separated substances. 3) Separated substances are the universal and first causes of being. (*Nam praedictae substantiae separatae sint universales et primae causae essendi*) 4) The universal principles make up the *subject* of the science, and they are *ens* and the things that follow *ens,* as potency and act, the one and the many, and they may be placed under the general heading of *ens commune,* a subject-genus in which the other two, separated substances and first causes are, in a broad way, contained. 5) Yet the knowledge of these last two are considered as the *end* of the science, since in studying *ens* we seek to know its causes.

6) All are studied as separated or separable from matter both in thought and in *esse*. 7) The science has three names, derived from the three things studied: i. e., separated substances, which gives to it the name of theology (Aristotle called these gods); *ens commune*, from which the name metaphysics is derived; and first causes, whence we get the name primary philosophy.

We note first that this exposition of metaphysics is still the generally accepted notion of the science. Granted that much development and new terminology has come in since the time of St. Thomas, still the metaphysician today is seeking to know the nature of being and the things that follow being, i. e., the transcendental properties of being; still tracing things back to their ultimate explanations, i. e., their causes; and still trying to plumb the nature of the absolutely first substance, which is God. Yet one sentence does stand out as a difficulty, and we have given the Latin above: "the aforesaid separated substances are the universal and first causes of being." What does St. Thomas mean by "separated substances?" Why the plural? We think there is a real problem here and we hope to throw some light on its solution before the end of this paper. But for now we shall be content to state it. In any case, the whole tone of this introduction is clear; it is a valid Thomistic text on the nature of metaphysics and something more than a broad suggestion that we shall find this science exposed in the pages to follow.

Let us examine some of these pages. After establishing that wisdom seeks to know the first causes of things, Aristotle examines the opinions of the ancients to find what they have said about these causes. While one could judge the first book of the *Metaphysics* superficially as history, we know after a close reading that it is far from that; it is philosophy, and more especially, wisdom engaged in its function of ordering and judging. Aristotle, and St. Thomas in the *Commentary*, study the opinions of the earlier thinkers not precisely to report what

they said but to find the truth. Here we have the beginning of the science of metaphysics, an inductive inquiry into the opinions of other men, to lay the groundwork for the number and the nature of the causes of things.

The first thing we note in the *Commentary* is its *length;* to every one page of Aristotelian text we find six and sometimes more of Thomistic explanation. Now if St. Thomas were merely trying to expose the doctrine of Aristotle, abstracting from his own, he surely goes the long way around to accomplish that task. And when we examine those six pages closely, we find many things that need not be there if such were the aim of St. Thomas. Perhaps if we examine at some length the first book, this point will be clearer.

Thomas follows the order of Aristotle in outlining the opinon of those who held that the universe could be explained by one or more material causes.[5] Thales held for water; [6] Anaximander, air; [7] Heraclitus, fire; [8] Empedocles brought in all three, and added a fourth, earth; [9] Anaxagoras said it was made up of an infinite number of things.[10]

The proponents for an efficient cause are then discussed. Parmenides held for "love"; [11] Hesiod in his poetic way also mentioned a love that was immortal, and which moved the chaos.[12] Anaxagoras introduced an intellect. Yet because of the evil in the world Empedocles brought in contraries as principles, holding that good things come from love, evil from hatred or strife.[13] To explain motion Leucippus and Democritus claimed the basic contraries were the full and the void.[14] Mathematical contraries were introduced by the Pythagoreans.[15]

[5] *In I Meta.*, 4, nn. 69-72.
[6] *Ibid.*, n. 77.
[7] *Ibid.*, n. 86.
[8] *Ibid.*, n. 87.
[9] *Ibid.*, n. 88.
[10] *Ibid.*, n. 90.
[11] *Ibid.*, 5, nn. 95, 101.
[12] *Ibid.*, n. 102.
[13] *Ibid.*, 6, nn. 105, 106.
[14] *Ibid.*, 7, nn. 112-118.
[15] *Ibid.*, 7, n. 120; 8, nn. 124-133.

Parmenides had recourse to the two contraries of hot and cold to explain the visual universe.[16]

The Platonic doctrine on the Forms is evidence in favor of a formal cause as well as a kind of material cause.[17] Thomas concludes the initial investigation with a note on the final cause. Neither Plato nor Empedocles nor Anaxagoras explicitly used goodness as a final cause. The good to them acted in an efficient, formal or material way, but never *per se* as a final cause.[18]

A formal criticism follows. After observing that the study of these men has brought to light only four kinds of causes, Thomas, following Aristotle, makes his criticism of these who held for a material cause,[19] and efficient cause [20] the formal and material cause of the Pythagoreans,[21] and the formal, material, and quasi-final cause of the Platonists.[22] This closes the book.

We shall examine the criticism of Aristotle and St. Thomas on some of these opinions. First, the opinion of Thales. Here is what Aristotle says:

> Thales, the founder of this type of philosophy says the principle is water (for which reason he declared that the earth rests on water), getting the notion perhaps from seeing that the nutriment of all things is moist, and that heat itself is generated from the moist and kept alive by it (and that from which they come to be is a principle of all things.) He got his notion from this fact, and from the fact that the seeds of all things have a moist nature, and that water is the origin of the nature of moist things.[23]

St. Thomas devotes five numbers to this text (nos. 77-81) or, roughly, about five times what is before him. Where Aristotle calls Thales the founder of speculative philosophy, Thomas, showing a flare for history, explains the reason. "He calls

[16] *Ibid.*, 9, n. 142.
[17] *Ibid.*, 10, n. 169.
[18] *Ibid.*, 11, nn. 177-178.
[19] *Ibid.*, 12, nn. 181-189.
[20] *Ibid.*, nn. 190-200.
[21] *Ibid.*, 13, nn. 201-207.
[22] *Ibid.*, 14-17, nn. 208-272.
[23] *Meta.*, I, 2, 983b20-27.

Thales the founder of speculative philosophy because among the seven wise men who came after the 'poetic theologians' (*theologos poetas*) he alone busied himself with the cause of things; whereas the others were occupied with moral matters." [24] Thomas goes on to name the seven wise men and to date them in reference to the history of the Jews. He then defends Aristotle for bringing up this theory of Thales. It would seem that it does not belong here but rather in the science of nature, but no, to the earlier thinkers, who knew nothing but material things, this *was* the first philosophy; and so Thales thought that the earth rested on water as an effect rested on or depended on a first cause.[25] This may seem rather a primitive notion to us now, but Thomas treats this and other opinions with a certain reverence. We are watching the human mind suffering its first labor pains as it struggles to give birth to a *philosophia prima*, an ultimate explanation of all things.

In what would appear to be random reasons put down by Aristotle for the position of Thales, Thomas perceives an admirable order. One reason has to do with the cause of the thing itself, another with the generation of things. And from the first the second follows, for the principle of the being of a thing is also the first principle of its generation. Corruption is considered, since when a thing dissolves it goes back into that out of which it was generated; and finally, whatever precedes the generation of a thing and remains after the corruption must always be. And this, in each case, is moisture, or water.[26]

Thales argued that the food, the heat, the animal life, and the seeds of things were held in existence through water, and Thomas has a paragraph on each of these. On the third, we read: "The third sign is that animal life consists in moisture. Thus an animal dies when his natural fluid (*humor*) dries up, and is kept alive by its conservation. Now to live is the being

[24] *In I Meta.*, 4, n. 77. [25] *Ibid.*, n. 78. [26] *Ibid.*, n. 79.

of living things. Whence from this it is clear that moisture is the principle of things." [27]

Vivere autem viventibus est esse. The principle is not that of Thales. St. Thomas puts it down to explain the process that must have taken place in the mind of Thales. Life constitutes the very existence of living things. So Thales, determining the first constituent of life, would name the first constituent of *esse;* this was water.

The formal criticism of this and other opinions is taken up later. Thales and all who held for one material principle were wrong for three reasons. They did not explain immaterial things,[28] nor change,[29] nor the subsistence of natural things, the principle of which is form not matter.[30] Here we see Thomas elaborating somewhat on the Aristotelian criticism and actually inserting a more metaphysical viewpoint. He indicates that, as the thought on the nature of the material principle progressed, the thinkers more and more chose simple things, from water to air to fire. Yet they realized that they were positing an imperfect principle to explain something more perfect, since the composed thing is more perfect than the element. Confusion arose. These men felt that the first principle should be greater in perfection than its effects, but they kept positing a more imperfect principle. Thomas enlightens us by bringing in the distinction between potency and act.[31]

If one considers what is first *simpliciter,* then it would be necessary to place a more perfect being, since actuality is more perfect and precedes potentiality, and also since nothing is reduced from potentiality to actuality except by a being already actual. Yet in the realm of material things, and according to the order of time, the first principle ought to be imperfect and in potentiality to further perfection. Such criticism uses the meta-

[27] *Ibid.*, n. 80.
[28] *Ibid.*, 12, n. 181.
[29] *Ibid.*, n. 182.
[30] *Ibid.*, n. 183.
[31] *Ibid.*, n. 188.

physical notions of potency and act, which are nowhere in evidence in the Aristotelian text.[32] This is not because Aristotle never attained these notions; he does, but they appear in the later books. The point is that here Thomas is anticipating something not yet in the text.

The truth which Thales and the others who posited one material principle were groping for is that proposed by Aristotle and St. Thomas, namely, that entering into the composition of all material things there is one *materia prima,* capable of receiving all forms, itself pure potentiality.[33] The first real effort made to determine the existence and the nature of this principle came from Thales.

This opinion of Thales is hardly an ultimate explanation of the universe. Anaxagoras comes closer when he places an intellect. Parmenides and Hesiod also take a giant step when they say love is somehow involved. Here we see the mind moving towards the notion of an intelligent, efficient, first cause. St. Thomas lingers over these. Aristotle says that Anaxagoras in placing the *Nous* is like a sober man in contrast to the random talk of his predecessors.[34] Thomas gives us some reasons for this statement. The other opinions do not explain how matter could be changed. It does not change itself. Wood, for example, cannot become a bed all by itself. But if we need a principle to explain how wood becomes a bed, then we need the same sort of principle to explain how moisture, seed, dirt, become a tree, become wood. The explanation of the wood is not exhausted by enumerating the things from which wood comes: water, earth, fire, air. We must explain what principle is "pushing" them into becoming wood.[35]

Could chance be the explanation? No, since chance events never happen as regularly or as frequently as wood "happens."

[32] *Meta.*, I, 8, 989a12.
[33] *In I Meta.*, 9, n. 144.
[34] *Meta.*, I, 3, 984b15.
[35] *In I Meta.*, 5, nn. 93-98.

And so from this kind of thinking two theories emerged: Anaxagoras, considering the *order* in things, placed an intellect as an efficient cause.[36] The other opinion of Parmenides and Hesiod, adopted later by Empedocles, considered the *goodness* in things, and placed love as a cause.[37]

Thomas elaborates on the Aristotelian text and suggests that Hesiod's argument was really anthropomorphic.

> Thus he placed chaos and love [as first principles] since in existing things there must be present not only the material of things that move, but also the moving cause, which moves and brings things together. Now in us love moves to action because it is the principle of all our affections. Fear, sadness, hope proceed from love alone. It is clear that love also brings things together from the fact that love is a certain union of lover and beloved, since the lover considers the beloved as part of himself.[38]

The arguments of Hesiod and Anaxagoras are built up from the viewpoint of man. To explain the order in artifical things, an intelligent man as efficient cause is needed; so some kind of intelligent being is needed to explain the order of the universe. And since we also place a benevolent man as principle of whatever is good in the human order, so we must place some kind of benevolent principle to explain whatever is good in the natural order.

Empedocles takes the argument even further. Granted that love is needed to explain the goodness and the union among things, what of evil and separation? Love may be causing generation and life, what of corruption and death? We can begin to see why he placed hatred as a first principle.[39] And perhaps we begin to see also why Thomas thought these opinions were well worth commentary. They appear on the surface to be childish, but when we see their inner depth and witness the struggle of reason to make some sense out of the universe, our

[36] *Ibid.*, n. 100.
[37] *Ibid.*, nn. 101, 102.
[38] *Ibid.*, 6, n. 102.
[39] *Ibid.*, nn. 105, 106.

criticism is silenced. The obvious order of a flower, a tree, and the motion of the planets is explained by the presence of an intellect; the goodness and beauty of these things are explained by love; but when the flower corrupts, when the tree rots, how can we explain these things except by placing a principle of hatred somewhere? In a sense we can see the drama of Christian redemption foreshadowed in these ancient concepts.

Examples can be multiplied of the critical faculty of St. Thomas.[40] We should like now to contrast some of the doctrine presented in the *Commentary* with that in the *Summa Theologiae*, for it is in such a comparison that we can come to another indication of the authenticity of the doctrine in the *Commentary*. Aristotle begins his work with the famous words, "all men by nature desire to know." Thomas offers three reasons for this natural desire. And be it noted that these reasons are *not* in the Aristotelian text. First, since all things desire their natural perfection and potentiality is directed to actuality, then man desires his perfection, namely knowledge.[41] All things, secondly, desire their proper operation, and to understand (*intelligere*) is man's.[42] The third reason is worth quoting in full. All men by nature desire to know:

> Thirdly, because it is desirable for anything to be joined to its principle, for in this the perfection of anything consists. Thus a circular motion is the most perfect, as is proven in the eighth book of the *Physics*, because the end joins the beginning. Now to the separated substances, which are the principles of the human intellect, and to which the human intellect is related as imperfect to perfect, man is not joined except by intellect; whence in this the ultimate happiness of man consists. Therefore man naturally desires knowledge.[43]

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[40] Cf. the treatment of Leucippus and Democritus, 7, nn. 112-118; of the Pythagoreans, nn. 119-123; 13, 204-205; of Parmenides, 9, 139-144; of the Platonic theory of the separated forms, 10, 152-170, 14-17, 208-272. In all these places we have sound Thomistic doctrine.

[41] *In I Meta.*, 1, n. 2.

[42] *Ibid.*, n. 3.

[43] *Ibid.*, n. 4.

"To the separated substances, which are the principles of the human intellect . . ." (*quae sunt principia intellectus humani*). What does this mean? What are the separated substances? How can they be principles of man's intellect? To them man is joined through intellect (*conjungitur per intellectum*) and in this does man's ultimate happiness consist (*in hoc ultima hominis felicitas consistit*).

This is odd. From Christian revelation we know that man's ultimate happiness consists in the vision of God. Then St. Thomas means God when he says separated substances? But why the plural? We will remember that the same kind of confusion appears in the introduction where St. Thomas says that these same substances are the universal and first cause of being; and there again he was on his own, so to speak, i. e., not quoting Aristotle. If he means God, then is this a reference to the three divine Persons? But each Person is not a separated substance; the distinction in the Trinity is one of relation not of substance. Then angels? But how are angels principles of the human intellect? Principles of being? Do they cause us in some way? But God is the cause of man. All through the *Commentary* we find many references to these separated substances, an expression which is derived from Aristotle. But just what is the meaning behind it? When we turn to the *Summa*, we find the light we are looking for. Thomas asks precisely this question: whether happiness consists in the knowledge of the separated substances, namely angels?[44] Here, at last, he makes a positive identification. Yet he answers in the negative. Then we have a contradiction? And we find also that in an objection which he proposes against this new conclusion he seems to be quoting himself against himself.

The final perfection of a thing is for it to be united to its principle: wherefore a circle is said to be a perfect figure because its beginning

[44] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, 3, 7.

and end coincide. But the beginning of human knowledge is from the angels by whom men are enlightened, as Dionysius says. Therefore the perfection of the human intellect consists in contemplating the angels.[45]

This rather unusual apparent contradiction is certainly worth our attention. One might say that Thomas, the theologian, seems to be working against Thomas, the philosopher! To show that man's ultimate happiness does not consist in contemplating the angels Thomas presents first a text from Sacred Scripture. "Let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me."[46] From this it is clear to Thomas that man's final goal or happiness consists only in the knowledge of God. Then we read this:

As stated above, man's perfect happiness consists not in that which perfects the intellect by some participation, but in that which is so by its essence. Now it is evident that whatever is the perfection of a power is so, in so far as the proper formal object of that power belongs to it. Now the proper object of the intellect is the true. Therefore the contemplation of whatever has participated truth does not perfect the intellect with its final perfection. Since therefore the order of things is the same in being and in truth (*Metaph.* ii, 1), whatever are beings by participation, are true by participation. Now angels have being by participation; because in God alone is His being (*suum esse*) His essence, as shown in the first part (q. 44, a. 1). It follows that God alone is truth by His essence, and that contemplation of Him makes man perfectly happy. However, there is no reason why we should not admit a certain imperfect happiness in the contemplation of the angels; and higher indeed than in the consideration of the speculative sciences.[47]

In answer to the objection already cited Thomas answers by denying that the angels *created* man's soul, and only by supposing that could we say that man's happiness could be had in being joined to his principle. The final perfection of the human intellect is in union with God, "Who is the first principle both of the creation of the soul and of its enlightenment." Only

[45] *Ibid.*, ad 2. [46] *Jeremias* 9, 24. [47] *Summa Theol.*, I-II, 3, 7.

as ministers do the angels enlighten, and in this way they help man to attain his end. Man still may be said to reach the angels "according to a degree of the participating power" for man's final perfection will consist in attaining to a contemplation such as that the angels have.[48] In other words, man will join the angels in the contemplation of God.

We have the same light on the difficulty seen in the *Commentary*. St. Thomas saves the truth of that earlier statement by saying that there will be a certain imperfect happiness in our contemplation of the angels, happiness that will be "ultimate" too, since it will be a part of the blessed state in heaven. Again, he saves the causality of the angels, showing that it is instrumental and in the line of illumination. In this way they are our *principles*, and in contemplating them, we are joined to them *per intellectum*.

But how different is his tone! In the one case he talks of "separated substances," in the other, "angels"; he uses in one case the term "principles" without qualification, and in the other, "those who enlighten as ministers"; or again we see the phrase "man's ultimate happiness" matched against "a certain imperfect happiness." Why? We think that in the first instance Thomas, knowing he is in philosophy, forbids himself the use of the light of faith; and in the other, he is in theology and uses every light of supernatural revelation available to illumine this problem on the separated substances. It is good to recall again that the three reasons offered by Thomas to explain the desire of all men to know were *his own*; they were not in the Aristotelian text. Thomas is acting as an *independent philosopher*, and we think both words are important. He is here independent of Aristotle, but still a *philosopher*. He is not an historian, nor a theologian. Wisdom here is keeping faith and reason distinct.

And what of that statement in the introduction that the

[48] *Ibid.*, ad 3.

separated substances are the first principles of being? This is more difficult to reconcile with the teaching in the *Summa* that only God is the first principle of being,[49] but St. Thomas is using the term "separated substances" in a deliberately confused way in the introduction to the *Metaphysics,* so that it will not exclude God. We know this is true since Thomas says in that same text that the science treats of things removed from matter in every way, "as God and the intelligences." In other words, the term includes both the angels and God, the knowledge of which, we must remember, is not presupposed but is an end of the science. In theology Thomas can make the necessary distinctions, and even there he does not exclude the angels from some activity in the generation of beings. "But since the composite agent, which is a body, is moved by a created spiritual substance, as Augustine says, (*De Trin.* iii, 4.5), it follows further that even corporeal forms are derived from spiritual substances, not as emanating from them, but as the term of their movement." And again, "Forms received into matter are to be referred not to self-subsisting forms of the same type, as the Platonists held, but either to intelligibile forms of the angelic intellect, from which they proceed by movement, or still higher, to the types in the divine intellect."[50] We see again a remarkable difference in terminology and a clarification of the role of God and the angels; but that clarification does not come from philosophy and from reason, and so Thomas keeps it out of the *Commentary on the Metaphysics.*

Indeed, the Introduction to the *Commentary* leads us to believe that we *can* have considerable knowledge about the nature of separated substances, while in the *Summa* Thomas observes that the first principles of speculative science are received through the senses, so that the entire consideration of the speculative sciences does not extend further than knowledge

[49] I, 44, 1; 65, 3, 4.

[50] I, 65, 4, and ad 2.

of sensibles can lead. "But it has been shown that man cannot acquire through sensibles the knowledge of separated substances which are above the human intellect." [51] In this same article we also see as *an objection* the Aristotelian doctrine that philosophy should make a man happy, in so far as it satisfies the natural desire to know, a doctrine for which we have seen Thomas offer reasons in support. How reconcile these apparent contradictions? In precisely the same way. In the *Summa* Thomas teaches that we cannot rise from material things to a perfect knowledge of immaterial things, but that we can have some knowledge of them.[52] We cannot know their quiddity, but we may attain to a "scientific knowledge of them by way of negation, and by their relation to material things," and since they are in the predicament of substance, we can even know something positive about them according to some common notion, though not according to specific nature.[53] Regarding the argument concerning happiness, Thomas says that the contemplation in the speculative sciences does bring a participated happiness, though this is not perfect.[54]

If one were to read these texts separately, that is, the texts from the *Commentary* and those from the *Summa*, without knowing the author or the context, he might come to the conclusion that two different men wrote them. He would judge that the first author was extremely optimistic about the powers of the human mind; the other somewhat pessimistic, but extremely optimistic about the power of faith and divine revelation. And if it were then revealed to him that the same man wrote both texts, he might come to the conclusion that the first, from the *Commentary*, were written early in life, by a youth full of hope in the powers of reason and the science of metaphysics. The other would be written very late in life, after this same youth had learned, through failure in his investigations carried out

[51] I-II, 3, 6.
[52] I, 88, 2, ad 2.
[53] *Ibid.*, ad 4.
[54] I-II, 3, 6, ad 2.

by reason, of the necessity of faith. But the wonderful truth here is that the same man wrote them both at approximately the same time in his intellectual maturity.[55] We say this is wonderful because it reveals the very great reverence Thomas had for both reason and faith all through his life. He will not despise the work of pure reason; it can attain the truth; it comes from God. And if there is a truer expression of the discoveries of reason in another Book, Thomas will not clutter up the work of reason by qualifying it and minimizing it and degrading it. The thesis, so to speak, of reason's worth is presented in the philosophical works of St. Thomas; the objections, and the consequent qualifications of the thesis are presented where they belong, in the theological works. Here then, in the *Commentary on the Metaphysics* seen in contrast to the *Summa Theologiae*, we are able to perceive quite clearly the definite distinction that Thomas makes between faith and reason. Their objects are formally distinct. Thomas keeps them that way.

"Revelation for St. Thomas was not in philosophy a principle of demonstration. But it was a guiding star."[56] Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange is of course correct, but we may discern various functions of a guiding star: it may lead us to further truth, or it may keep us from error. In this case it seems to keep reason from becoming irrationally optimistic. Man can know separated substances, be joined to them, and be happy: reason tells us this. And so Thomas asserts what reason asserts in the *Metaphysics*. But we cannot know them perfectly, and they will not make us perfectly happy. Revelation tells us that; and so Thomas asserts what revelation asserts, in the *Summa*. In the one we are led to know something of the splendor of metaphysics; in the other, something of its limitations.

[55] All the critical historians assign a late date to the composition of the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, 1266 being the earliest, at which time St. Thomas had already begun the *Summa*. Walz, Mandonnet, Grabmann, as cited by Vernon Bourke in his introduction to the *Omnia Opera* (Parma, 1852) reprinted (New York, 1948) p. xiii.

[56] R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality* (St. Louis, 1950) p. 57.

But we think the main point is clear. In the texts we have been studying from the *Commentary,* St. Thomas is writing his own thought. In explaining the texts of Aristotle, he frequently brings in new insights and illuminations; he sometimes brings objections to the doctrine and then answers these objections; occasionally he will openly dissent from the text.

For example, at the beginning of the second Book, Aristotle asserts that the investigation of the truth is in one way hard, and he offers his famous example in evidence of this. "For as the eyes of bats are to the blaze of day, so is reason in our soul to the things which are by nature most evident of all." [57]

Thomas does not think the example is very good.

> It seems that this example is not fitting. Because sense is a power of a corporeal organ, it corrupts in the face of excessive stimulae. But since the intellect is not a power of any corporeal organ, it does not corrupt in the face of excessive intelligibility; whence after being exposed to an object of great intelligibility the intellect does not understand a lesser intelligible object in a poorer way, but better, as the third book of the *de Anima* asserts.[58]

He goes on to say that it is not because of the corruption of the power, as the example would indicate, that we cannot grasp extremely intelligibile things; it is rather because of a disproportion between the power and the object. The correction is made because Averroes had made bad use of the example. Averroes claimed that the example did not prove that we could not know separated substances directly. We can, Averroes said, else nature would be acting in vain, in the sense that there would be intelligible things but no intelligences to understand them. Thomas points out that the purpose of separated substances is not for us to know them, and even if we cannot know them directly, other intelligences can. If the bats cannot see the sun, the eagles can. What we see here is a correction of an Aris-

[57] *Meta.*, II, 903b10. [58] *In II Meta.*, 1, n. 283.

totelian text because another philosopher had misinterpreted it. And we note that he saves the authority of Aristotle by citing him from another place. He also uses this example with approval in other contexts.

There are many such examples of amplification, independent observations, defense of the Aristotelian position against other philosophers, and corrections, though these last are certainly not as numerous. We shall offer a few references for the interested reader. When Aristotle discusses the Platonic notion of participation, he leaves its explanation an open question. Ten numbers in the *Commentary* are devoted to its explanation by St. Thomas. He defines participation, gives examples, and then criticizes Plato from a metaphysical viewpoint not in the Aristotelian text, claiming that such participation is mathematical, i. e., a participation in the Number One. Plato's one was not convertible with being.[59] Thomas makes an identification between participation and analogy, even though at the same time agreeing with Aristotle on his criticism of participation. This is a very curious text and, we think, is an example of St. Thomas saving what is good in the Platonic position, even though this position is being thrown out by Aristotle.[60] Again Aristotle rejects the Platonic Forms as patterns. Thomas is in agreement, but he qualifies the rejection by saying we should not therefore hold that there is no divine knowledge as the exemplar of all things.[61] When Aristotle asserts that the principles of eternal things have no cause for their being, yet cause the being of other things, Thomas emphasizes this text, reducing the plural of Aristotle into the singular, and making sure we take note of the fact that Aristotle does say that the plural principles cause the *being* of other things. "For even if [the celestial bodies] are incorruptible, they still have a cause, not only as regards their motion, as some think, but even regarding

[59] *Ibid.*, I, 10, nn. 151-160. [60] *Ibid.*, 14, n. 244. [61] *Ibid.*, 15, n. 233.

their being, as the Philosopher expressly says here." [62] Then St. Thomas strngthens Aristotle's argument with his own, based on participation,[63] Thomas devotes some time to an objection of Avicenna's on the notion of the one, and in so doing clarifies Aristotle's position on the relation of essence and existence. Though existence is something else than essence, it should not be understood as being added after the fashion of an accident, but as though constituted by the principles of the essence. "And therefore this name Being (*Ens*) given to a thing by reason of its existence signifies the same thing as the name which is given by reason of its essence." [64]

It is especially in the twelfth Book, where Aristotle puts down his doctrine of the existence and nature of the divine Being, that we find abundant exemplification of the authenticity of St. Thomas' *Commentary*. Thomas will recast some of the Aristotelian arguments, and then defend the Stagirite. For example he observes that Aristotle's basis for placing an unmoved mover, namely, the existence of eternal motion and time, is not justified, but he immediately hurries on to say that what is proved in the text of the eternity and immateriality of the first principle does follow of necessity.[65]

Aristotle describes the first unmoved mover as eternal, substance, and actuality. On these words Thomas writes that therefore there can be no potentiality in the first Being, "but that it be a *per se* existing substance, and that its substance be its act. And this is what he concludes to above." [66] There is in this text and in others, some of which we have already seen, a note of controversy; as if St. Thomas had in mind other interpretations of Aristotle which he judges to be false. Otherwise we cannot explain the tone of phrases like "and this is

[62] *Ibid.*, II, 2, n. 295.
[63] *Ibid.*, n. 296.
[64] *Ibid.*, IV, 2, n. 558.
[65] *Ibid.*, XII, 5, nn. 2498, 2499.
[66] *Meta.*, XII, 6, 1072a24, *In XII Meta.*, 6, n. 2518.

what the Philosopher expressly teaches," or "even though his argument is not demonstrative here, he still has the correct conclusion," and so on.

It is interesting to follow the *Commentary* on the great controverted question on Aristotle's opinion on the number of unmoved movers. For after he has established that God is one, then he goes blithely on to discuss the number of "gods," and observes that the ancients who handed down the opinion that there were many gods were inspired. Thomas insists that Aristotle comes to the knowledge of the first Being, that this Being is one. He then explains that among the ancient philosophers some had treated of separated substances, and these were handed down to posterity through myths in which they were called gods. The presence of these separated substances is also shown, says Thomas, from what has gone before in the text, but "if only the first principle is called God, there is only one God, as is obvious from what has been said before." [67] It seems, however, that we would be less than fair if we did not admit that Aristotle is obscure in passages in this Book. He it at the uttermost limit of his science, peering into the sun, with only his reason and a few myths handed down from antiquity to help him understand the nature of the first principle. We began this paper by quoting his most famous descriptive lines about God; they still stand as a great obilisk of Greek thought. Thomas throughout this Book defends this thought against all comers, and he carries the defense into his theological works as well. But our only point here is that the *Commentary*, written by St. Thomas late in his life, is a true reflection of the mind of the Angelic Doctor. We hope we have given sufficient evidence to establish that point. The last words of Thomas in the *Commentary* are these.

[67] *Meta.*, XII, 8, 1074a36, 1074b1-10; *In XII Meta.*, 10, nn. 2596, 2597. For a fuller discussion on these points cf. our *Aristotelian Influence in Thomistic Wisdom* (Washington, 1956).

Whence it follows that the whole universe is as one thing that is ruled, and one kingdom. And so it is necessary that it be ordered by one governor. And this is what he concludes, that there is one ruler of the whole universe; namely, the first mover, and the first intelligible being, and the first good, which he has called God, Who is blessed forever and ever.[48]

And with St. Thomas we can only add, Amen!

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[48] *In XII Meta.*, 12, n. 2663.

Fr. Lonergan and the Participation School

by Cornelius Ryan Fay

THE PUBLICATION of *Insight* [1] by the Rev. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S. J., has pointed up the old argument over the exact Thomistic significance of the word "participation" in epistemology. The matter, size, style, and pretensions of Fr. Lonergan's book have caused and will cause much comment. The use of the phrase, "The Participation School" [2] among recent scholastics who have suggested its re-evaluation, underlines the crucial importance of participation: participation as it applies to being, participation as it applies to knowledge.

Now, broadly speaking, it is impossible in our tradition to be against participation. It belongs to a philosophical monotheism just as solidly as creation, conservation, and concurrence. But the word, like *being,* has many senses. The contention of the epistemological members of the participation school is that St. Thomas' Aristotelian vocabulary obscures the fact that his sense of the word *participation,* as it applies to knowledge, is actually Augustinian and Platonic. The school freely admits that most scholastic do not agree with their interpretation. But this fact only fills them fuller with a sense of urgency and mission. They speak with evangelistic zeal of the vital aspects of the thought of their master

[1] (New York: 1956).

[2] In W. Clarke, "The Meaning of Participation in St. Thomas," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association,* XXVIII (1952) 147-157. Fr. Clarke's interests seem mainly ontological; however, others such as Fr. Lonergan, Fr. Weigel and Fr. Donceel belong to the school in its epistemological sense.

which have, somehow, been overlooked by other, perhaps, less perceptive, Thomists.

Fr. Little, feels that the Platonic elements in St. Thomas are vital. Fr. Donceel, "submits that a certain number of American Thomists are emphasizing the empiricistic aspect of the doctrine of their master." [3] Fr. Clarke, S. J., notes points about St. Thomas which, to his knowledge, besides himself, only Fr. Geiger has commented.[4] Fr. Lonergan, S. J., talks about the "disregarded wealth in Thomist rational psychology . . . long overlooked." [5] He anticipates the "normal resistance to change." [6] He is working in a "neglected region." [7]

This school, because of the influence of historical circumstances, contains more than its share of Jesuits. But it does not follow, and it is emphatically not the case, that most Jesuits are of this school. In the history of recent Jesuit education the prime cause has been the influence of the "Museum Lessianum Group" at Eggerhoven, on the outskirts of Louvain. Fr. Maréchal and Fr. Scheuer, no longer walk side by side through the corridors of that scholasticate, but the soul of their teaching is like John Brown's. Participation is being offered in a Platonic, or Kantian sense, and it is being offered as Thomistic. Ordinarily Thomists say that according to the mind of St. Thomas the participation of the created in the uncreated light is a participation in a power. But the new school says that the participation is a participation in words (a *verbum,* several *verba,* the laws of thought, universal necessary judgments, forms dynamically oriented to being [or Being], *habitus primorum principiorum,* and the like).

[3] *Thought,* XXXII (1957) 189.

[4] *Art. cit.,* p. 189.

[5] "The Concept of Verbum in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas; III, Procession and Related Notions," *Theological Studies,* VIII (1947) 404. Footnote 72 locates all five articles.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Insight,* p. xiii.

Philosopher at Louvain are no doubt amused to see us still arguing these issues. The whole ground has been gone over in the form of at least two monumental and notorious arguments and several lesser conflicts among twentieth century scholastics in Europe. And it has been set forth in Gilson's *L'épistémologie thomiste* [8] a sort of biased and brief history of modern European scholastic epistemology, and definitively in Georges Van Riet's *L'épistémologie thomiste.*[9] It is valuable, I suppose, to a West Pointer to reënact the Civil War, but not to the point of spilling blood. I suspect that if our arguments were set against the background of the discussions and the historical investigations of the competent scholastics who have gone before us, then our own dialogue would profit in definition, penetration, and scope. After all Domet de Vorges, Mercier, Noël, John Rickaby, Gilson, and Maritain have all been over precisely the same ground. One after another of these extremely competent men have been attracted by the subtleties of Kant but have yielded to The Philosopher. It is impossible to say that they have not read Aquinas. It is certainly rash to say that they have failed to make out at least the central points of his doctrine of intellect.

Augustinian vs. Thomistic Participation

There is a consensus. It could hardly be a disclosure that, in general, the Thomists and the Augustinians do not think that they think the same things regarding human participation in knowledge. True, Augustine talked about participation in "the eternal reasons" and Aquinas talked about participation of "the created in the uncreated light." Ordinary Thomists and Augustinians, for centuries, have taken it as unquestioned, that in the mind and usage of those two great doctors, the phrases

[8] (Paris, 1938).

[9] (Louvain, 1946). Subtitled *Recherches sur le problème de la connaissance dans l'école thomiste contemporaine.*

quoted have different meanings. Ordinarily they say that Augustine is Platonic and that Aquinas is Aristotelian.

Both parties admit that, without the participation suggested by the phrases quoted, human knowledge would be impossible. However, the Augustinian intends a participation in something more formed than formative. He intends a participation in a virtually or unconsciously innate set of concepts or judgments. For the Thomist, on the other hand, the participation in knowledge is a participation in something more nearly formative than formed. It is a participation in a *power,* or a participation through which man has a power to form for himself basic concepts and universal necessary judgments. This difference is what the ordinary Thomist and the ordinary Augustinian would agree on without argument. Each will have his reasons for accepting one position and for rejecting the other, but they agree, at least, on what their respective masters taught. It is the thesis of "the participation school" that Thomas taught what the ordinary Thomist and the ordinary Augustinian think that Augustine taught. I refrain, with difficulty, from calling this thesis "Extraordinary Thomism."

Since the argument is not new I take the opportunity in what follows to present a précis of the best answers I have read to this extraordinary contention. All of what I say is from scholastics who have written in the twentieth century. There are two main areas of retort. The first is to point out what happens to the theory of knowledge if the extraordinary Thomists are right. The second is to return to the text of St. Thomas and repeat the standard exegesis.

Two Basically Opposed Analogies for Knowledge

"Knowledge as Structure" vs. "Knowledge as Vision"

The form which participation takes in the *Insight* of Fr. Lonergan seems to me to be idealistic.[10] The *verba* which are

[10] Fr. M. O'Connell, writing in *The Modern Schoolman, XXIV* (1947)

our participation in the Uncreated Light comprise a frame or structure on which our experience is placed. I do not see any difference in these structures and the forms of thought of Kant, even though Fr. Lonergan maintains that Kant's revolution was only half-hearted. He speaks in many places of the "structure" of knowing.[11] He mentions a preconscious censorship which is "constructive"[12] of what will emerge into consciousness. He refers to the mind as a structure.[13] He speaks of "heuristic structures"[14] which, though initially latent, settle in advance the content of knowing. We have heuristic procedures that "inform"[15] inquiry. We read that intelligence does not follow external determinations but is rather "constitutive and . . . creative"[16] so that intelligence is to law as cause is to effect. Prior to our making judgments we find that there are "unanalysed structures"[17] which are "a way" of linking the conditioned with the fulfilling conditions in factual judgments.

Fr. Lonergan does not wince at saying that the foundations of logic rest on certain thought process "inevitabilities."[18] And not, as the ordinary Thomist would say, on the nature of being (unless, of course, "being" is defined precisely as "what is thought" just as, in fact, Fr. Lonergan does define it). Fr. Lonergan does not hesitate to name as one of his goals the setting forth the range of "the synthetic *a priori* components"[19] of our knowledge. Even metaphysics is derived from the "known structure of one's knowledge."[20] Experiencing has a

228, saw the Fr. Lonergan of 1946 as implying "all the requirements for idealism."

[11] E. g., *Insight*, pp. xxii, xxviii, 732.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 267.
[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 304, 378.
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 104, 359.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[16] *Theological Studies*, VII (1946) 380.
[17] *Insight*, p. 287.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 304.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. xii.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. xxix.

structure.[21] All is determined in this realm; "the structure of our knowing is determinate and so the structure of being proportionate to our knowing is determinate."[22] Cognitional activities have structures,[23] the very desire to know constitutes both the notion of being and the "normative structure"[24] of our cognitional acts. In short, intellection is structural.[25]

Lonergan Explicitly Rejects the Vision Analogy

In rejecting the ordinary scholastic position Fr. Lonergan remarks that most Thomists mistakenly hold that knowledge is something that is seen. On the contrary, being is what we see. Knowledge is the seeing of being. The verb "to see" is used analogously, of course. Knowledge has the being of an accident for us. It is something that we do. How could it be something that we see? As Maritain has famously put it, "We don't eat eating, we eat bread." However, Fr. Lonergan explains his position by saying that if knowledge is not

> something that we are but something that we see; it supposes that knowledge essentially is not identity with the known but some spiritual contact or confrontation with the known.[26]

For Fr. Lonergan, confrontation, or *constatation* as the French scholastics call it, is impossible. Ordinarily scholastics say that through an intentional becoming, we know. But where he treats the question *ex professo*[27] St. Thomas says that that which is known first is the thing. *Id quod intelligitur primo est res.* We infer the existence of the species from the fact of our

[21] *Ibid.*, p. xviii.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 362.
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 400, 401.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 395.
[25] *Theological Studies*, X (1949) 10.
[26] *Ibid.*, VIII (1947) 59.
[27] *Summa Theol.*, I, 85, 2 in c. "Whether the intelligible species are that which is known?"

knowledge of the thing. But the analogy to ocular vision is anathema to Fr. Lonergan. Knowledge is

> not a matter of considering ocular vision and then consciousness as an analogous spiritual vision that is attributed to a spirit.[28]

Again, ten years later he ridicules those who say that

> though knowing is not exclusively a matter of ocular vision, still it is radically that sort of thing.[29]

He claims that "intellect no more glances than sight smells." [30] "To cut a long story short, contemporary dogmatic realists [Fr. Donceel says "dogmatic empiricists"] escape the critical problem by asserting a confrontation of intellect with concrete reality." [31]

> It is so much more easy to affirm an intellectual intuition of concrete reality and thus eliminate so many problems.[32]

Hence the vision analogy is specifically rejected, a decision that has its amusing and its serious aspects. Are we to hope for heaven and the beatific structure? Why should Fr. Lonergan say that intellect "gazes" [33] at phantasms? What good would a participation in the uncreated *Light* do a created Light? Why, for that matter, should Fr. Lonergan write seven hundred ninety-five pages about something he calls In-sight if the intellect no more sees than sight smells? Why not *Insmell*?

If knowing is not "vision" but "structure" then why do we need light? If it is to see the structures, Fr. Lonergan might as well throw in the sponge. I would say that, ". . . one cannot but see that the whole must be greater than its

[28] *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947) 62.
[29] *Insight*, p. 320.
[30] *Theological Studies*, X (1949) 30.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 360.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 362.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 21. He later does reject the "gaze" analogy. See *Insight*, p. 320.

part; the habit of such seeing is the habit of intellect." The difficulty is that Fr. Lonergan has inconsistently said it himself.[34]

The Dynamism of the Structure

For Fr. Lonergan knowing has a "dynamic structure."[35] Before Fr. Weigel became more sympathetic to "dynamism" he remarked that nobody knew, after all, precisely what it meant.[36] But in epistemology, at least, the sense of dynamism is the sense, in general, that Fr. Maréchal gave to it in his five *Cahiers*.[37] The sense is kindred in Fr. Lonergan. There is a "finality"[38] to the intellect, a sort of magnetism of intellectual activity toward God. What is "dynamic" is consciousness in its orientation[39] and tendencies,[40] the human intelligence[41] and understanding,[42] as well, of course, as the cognitional process.[43] Fr. Lonergan claims[44] to have incorporated the Maréchalean sense of dynamism which has been well expressed by Albert Milet.[45] There is

> the natural orientation of the human mind toward the immediate intuition of Infinite Being . . . he [Maréchal] believed that the justification of the absolute character of human knowledge must take account of the most intimate subjective conditions of our spiritual nature and

[34] *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947) 54.

[35] *Insight, passim*, e. g., pp. xxii, 277, 346.

[36] *Theological Studies* in his first article on *Humani Generis*.

[37] They are modestly called *Notebooks*, but they actually constitute a history of philosophy from the Greeks on. They attempt to demonstrate affinities between Kant and Aquinas.

[38] *Insight*, p. xxii.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 370.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. xxviii.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 349.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. xxii.

[45] *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, XLIII (1945) 248. Since 1894 the title of this review has undergone four changes, one in orthography, but its present title will be used in these footnotes.

that this justification will be made, in the last analysis by our fundamental appetite for the Divine; . . . he affirmed that the élan of our soul toward the Supreme Being is, in itself, the primary source of its activity, its very nature as intelligence, and that the formal specifying object of our suprasensible faculties proceeds from this initial impulsion. In short . . . the dynamic aspect relative to the true and the good is the facet [*coté*] which reveals the solution to the critical problem.

Long before even the first of the *Cahiers*[46] was published, Msgr. Léon Noël, then in the Chair of Epistemology at the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie at Louvain, commented on this attitude of Maréchal's as presented in journal articles. He said that, whatever else might be said of the theory, it did not have the nature of a critique of knowledge. And we can see that there is something circular in the enterprise of proving the existence of God via this dynamic structure, and then calling on God to justify the validity of the dynamic structure which has just proved his existence.

Nevertheless, Fr. Lonergan does make several attempts at a critique of knowledge. These attempts indicate something about Fr. Lonergan's attitude toward the essential nature of consciousness. They show the critical pickle one gets into by insisting that knowledge is structure rather than vision.

Participation and the Possibility of Critique

I side with those who have said that the simple assertion, that human knowledge is through a participation in the Uncreated Light, is not self-justifying, critically. It may be true (and there certainly seems to be no other explanation from the point of view of the metaphysics of knowledge, i. e., the consideration of what knowledge is as something which exists), but the question in epistemology is: how do I know that it is

[46] The general title of the series is *Le point de départ de la métaphysique.*

true? If the structure of knowledge is justified by its dynamism, and if the dynamism of knowledge is justified by its participation, then, all we have to prove is that there is participation. If we can know that there is, in knowledge, a participation in the Divine Light, then, epistemologically, we are on Easy Street. It reminds me of Descartes. We know that our knowledge is valid because we know that an All-Perfect God would not, being veracious, deceive us. Locke uses the exact same argument.[47]

Here and there Fr. Lonergan says that we know that we are knowers, but we cannot criticize ourselves as knowers.[48] Elsewhere, he maintains that we can not "presuppose the validity of knowledge."[49] Where does that leave us especially in view of the fact that Fr. Lonergan recognizes at least the existence of the classical epistemological question:

> . . . it is one thing to give an account of the activity [of knowing] and it is something else to tackle the problem of objectivity.[50]

Critique and Consciousness as a Container vs. Consciousness as an Activity

There is one costly and crucial attitude which Fr. Lonergan has consistently held. Years ago he wrote that

> To judge that my knowing is similar to the known involves a comparison between the knowing and its standard; but either the standard is known or it is not known; *if it is known, then really the comparison is between two items of knowledge* and one might better maintain that we know directly without any comparing; on the other hand, if the standard is not known there can be no comparison.[51]

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[47] J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. A. Fraser (Oxford, 1894), bk. 4, ch. 4, sect. 4.

[48] *Insight*, p. 332, e. g.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 744.

[50] *Ibid.*; I can't find my page citation for this.

[51] *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947) 47. In the part which I have

This idea that the mind is aware only of itself and its own states has been variously called "The Postulate of Idealism" or "The Ego-Centric Predicament" or "Cartesian Psychology" or what have you. Unconsciously, people will usually imagine that consciousness has a "seat" somewhere inside the skull, e. g., in the pineal gland or in the optic thalami, and that the "ego" psychologically inhabits this "center" of consciousness after the manner of a car in a drive-in theatre. One sees a "representation" of the "outside" world therein. Descartes called on the veracity of God to assure himself that knowledge of reality was like reality, Spinoza relied on psycho-physical parallelism, Malebranche proposed occasionalism, Leibniz championed pre-established harmony, and, my favorite solver of this false problem, Berkeley, proposed acosmic idealism. To ask whether the perceptual representation of reality is really like reality is to assert tacitly that you can't see your hand in front of your face.

But the scholastic, just as anyone else with a tendency toward this Cartesian psychology of perception, will quite unconsciously and in all good faith speak after the analogy of a representative perception. It will be as if he took it that there was a consciously apprehended intermediary in perception through which things are known. (Aquinas maintained that there was not.[52]) How to determine whether the hand in your head is like the hand which, reportedly, is in front of your face is a very vexing problem. In fact, if you can't see your hand in front of your face, you can't solve this old problem at all. And if you think that you know only knowledge, only the contents of consciousness, you have run out of epistemological luck. And Fr. Lonergan does think that epistemologically he is contained. He writes in *Insight*

italized we see that Fr. Lonergan is tacitly taking as granted to him that we can know only knowledge. One eats eating instead of bread.

[52] *Summa Theol.*, I, 85, 2.

. . . knowing is immanent not simply in the ontological sense that knowing occurs within the knower but also in the epistemological sense that nothing is known *except the content immanent within* the act of knowing. A first step towards transcendence, then, is to reject the mistaken supposition that knowing consists in taking a look.[53]

Hence it is natural for Fr. Lonergan to say that, " The critical undertaking is not so simple as has been supposed. . . ." [54] Given Descartes' psychology it is impossible. In this regard it has been noted that from the painting of a hook we can hang nothing. Fr. Lonergan maintains that

The critical spirit can weigh all else in the balance, only on condition that it does not criticize itself. It is a self assertive spontaniety that demands sufficient reason for all else but offers no justification for its own demanding.[55]

Even in his apocalyptic visions of better metaphysics to come he stands by this pessimism. He holds that we must remember that revision of the cognitional process " has its limits, for there is no revision of the revisers themselves." [56] Juvenal's old tagline (VI. 347), " *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* "

Consciousness as an Activity

The container theory of consciousness is not the only theory. There is another both subtler and simpler, more man-in-the-street commonsensical and more Thomistic. Msgr. Léon Noël said that he thought that the famous dispute in the eighties between Richard Avenarius and Wilhelm Schupp in which nothing was held in common save the theory that consciousness was an activity served to reintroduce the idea into the scholastic renaissance. The attention with which Count Domet de Vorges of the Institute Catholique at Paris followed the argument makes Noël's theory plausible.

[53] *Insight*, pp. 634-635, italics added.
[54] *Ibid.*, p. 639.
[55] *Ibid.*, p. 332.
[56] *Ibid.*, p. 227.

Consciousness was not a thing, a place, a center, or a container. It was verbal, active; one was conscious *of* whatever one was conscious of. One did not enter into or go out of consciousness; one was sometimes conscious of what one perceived, imagined, dreamed, thought, remembered. One was, for instance, conscious of one's hand in front of one's face. One might ask whether he could bite the hand he was conscious of till it bled. But one would not ask whether the hand he was conscious of was really like some hand he was not conscious of. In terms of this "activity theory" approach, the traditional Cartesian problems concerning the likelihood that the representation "in" consciousness was really, really like the reality became false problems. There are still questions to discuss: if the secondary qualities are subjective, what is the degree of objectivity of the primary qualities? Which according to this theory of proof would it be possible to prove that what we ordinarily perceive in sense perception is material substance? But we no longer say that we sense sensations or that we perceive perceptions. We no longer hope that on account of the veracity of God the pictures we see are like reality. We don't perceive pictures. There is no *consciously apprehended* intermediary in perception.

Nevertheless Fr. Lonergan does offer several small reasons and one big reason for asserting the validity of knowledge, though he does not abandon the position that

> . . . critical inquiry has to be preceded by a pre-critical inquiry on the possibility of critical inquiry, and the pre-critical needs a pre-pre-critical inquiry, and so forth indefinitely.[57]

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 639.

How Fr. Lonergan Justifies the Validity of Human Knowledge

1. *A First Reason: Judgments with Transcendent Pretensions Do in Fact Exist.*

> The paramount issue, then, in determining the possibility of knowledge is always the fact of knowledge. The possibility of transcendent knowledge, then, is the possibility of grasping intelligently and affirming reasonably, a transcendent being. And the proof of the possibility lies in the fact that such intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation occur.[58]

A Comment: True, the possibility of a thing does follow from the fact of its existence. True, there are judgments with transcendent pretensions, they are possible. But the specifically epistemological question remains. Are they valid, are they meaningful, are they halves of antinomies? From the fact of their existence follows the possibility of their existence, not the possibility of their validity, truth or meaningfulness.

2. *A Second Reason: The Deepest Foundation for Knowledge is Pragmatic.*

It works hence it is valid.

> . . . there have been discerned natural inevitabilities and spontanieties that constitute the possibility of knowing, not by demonstration that one can know, but pragmatically, by engaging one in the process. Nor in the last resort can one reach a deeper foundation than that pragmatic engagement. Even to seek it involves a vicious circle; for if one seeks such a foundation, one employs one's cognitional process; and the foundation to be reached will be no more secure or solid than the inquiry utilized to reach it. As I might not be, I might be other than I am, so my knowing might not be, and it might be other than it is.[59]

A Comment: Sometimes what is not true is useful, and what is true is not useful. The usefulness of a proposition does not make it descriptive of reality. The claim of metaphysics goes

[58] *Ibid.*, p. 640.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 332.

beyond that of merely making statements which are useful with regard to reality.

3. *A Third Reason: The Correspondence between Knowledge and Reality is the Simplest Hypothesis for Explaining Why Knowledge Has its Peculiar Structure.*

So, as far as their definitions go, the differences in the metaphysical elements are differences in the process of knowing and, unless further evidence is forthcoming, they are not differences in the being to be known. Still, one may expect the further evidence to be available, for the simplest reason why our knowing has its peculiar structure would be that proportionate [meaning created] being has a parallel structure.[60]

A Comment: This seems more the reason angelic knowledge is as it is. But in epistemology a simple hypothesis though usually better than a complex one, is still not a reason but merely a hypothesis.

4. *The Ideal Reason: Define Being as the Object of Intelligence Then You Don't Have to Prove that it is its Object.*

Now if by being one means the objective of the pure desire to know, the goal of intelligent inquiry and critical reflection, the object of intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation, then one must affirm the intrinsic intelligibility of being. For one defines being by its intelligibility, one claims that being is precisely what is known by understanding correctly; one denies that being is anything apart from the intelligible or beyond it or different from it. . . .[61]

A Comment: This "reason" is not an argument. One defines, one claims, one denies, but one has not argued. We have a reversion to the pre-Socratic type of Wise Man who announces the truth. Philosophy, as understood from the days of Socrates, has been influenced, with the exception of a few egregious loners, by the dialogue. Reasons are given for an assertion. Counter reasons are suggested. Philosophy has become a thing

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 499. [61] *Loc. cit.*

full of reasons, some good, some not. But it is a supplying of reasons, or as we might say, reasonable. The simple assertion of a position, no matter how true it may be, is not philosophy as understood in the western tradition. Crowing over the reason-less-ness of an assertion is strange indeed.

This new "being" of Fr. Lonergan is something which consciousness simply "intends." [62] "In judgment, what is known is known as being." [63] "The notion of being does not determine which [of the major philosophical positions] . . . is correct; it merely determines that the intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed is being." [64] We have descended to sheer petulant insistence. After all, everybody uses the word being. But the question is, Does knowledge describe it? [65] What is the difference in substance between saying what Fr. Lonergan says and saying with Kant that experience will always conform to our ways of experiencing because we will always create experience in accordance with our ways of experiencing.

The consequence in natural theology of defining "being" in terms of knowledge is pointed out by of Fr. Lonergan's sympathetic reviewers. Fr. de Finance, writes [65a]

> If one defines being, as does the author [of *Insight*] in terms of [*par rapport à*] intelligence, it is logical to conceive of God, radically,

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[62] *Insight*, p. 360.

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 357.

[64] *Ibid.*, *passim*, e. g., pp. 361, 640.

[65] This definition of *being* rings inharmoniously with his earlier, "The real is what is, and what is, is known in the rational act, judgment." *Theological Studies*, VII (1946) 356. In his second definition of *being*, Fr. Lonergan would have it that *Esse est scientia entis*. Such a fiat is no help in epistemology where the traditional question might be condensed, not too inaccurately, to *Est scientia entis veritas entis?* Mother Saint Rita Marie, of Notre Dame College, Staten Island, suggested this formula.

[65a] In *Gregorianum*, XXXIX (1958) 134-135. Fr. de Finance claims that Fr. Lonergan's notion of *being* ". . . is sensibly that of Fr. Marc in his well-known Essay of 1932." Fr. de Finance may be referring to "L'idée de l'être chez Thomas et dans la Scolastique postérieur," *Archives de Philosophie*, X (1933) cahier 1.

> as an infinite act of intellection, which [or who] knows first itself, and through itself, all else. Does such an act exist? Yes, because otherwise the element of contingence, of facticity which inevitably remains despite all our attempts at interpretation and explanation would remain definitely inexplicable; being, on the contrary, would not be intelligible. From contingency one rises by means of causality towards transcendency.

The first sentence of this quotation seems to me to be an explicit adoption of the theory of John of St. Thomas that the root perfection of God, i. e., his metaphysical essence, is intelligence. It also seems to suppose that activity is prior, ontologically, to existence.

But to return to epistemology, Fr. Lonergan has claimed that it is the Aristotelian and Thomistic schools which have had results which have "largely anticipated our [his] own." [66] But I would suggest that the large anticipator of Fr. Lonergan's results walked the streets of Königsberg in 1781. The learned Professor at the Gregorian University complains of Kant that the *Critique of Pure Reason* was not sweeping enough; [67] it was only "half-hearted." [68] But along with the ordinary scholastic, the ordinary historian of philosophy, I would be hard pressed to say what further sweeping there is to do after Kant has swept out being.

Fr. Lonergan's Thomistic Exegesis and the Possibility of Critique

Fr. Lonergan is free enough in admitting that an ontology of knowledge is not the same colored horse as an epistemology of knowledge. He wisely states that

> The act of the thing as sensible is the act of sensation; the act of the thing as intelligible is the act of understanding; but we can proceed from these identities to valid concepts of essence and true affirmations of existence, because such procession is in virtue of our intellectual

[66] *Insight*, p. 400. [67] *Ibid.*, p. 408. [68] *Ibid.*, p. 413.

light, which is a participation of Eternal Light. Such is the Thomist ontology of knowledge. But is there also a Thomist epistemology? It is all very well to validate rational reflection by attributing the light of our intellects to the Eternal Light which is God. As an ontology of knowing it is satisfactory; as an epistemology it is null and void.[69]

Now, though epistemology is not ontology, nevertheless Fr. Lonergan suggests there is "a relevance of intellectual light to the critical problem." [70] And, sure enough, Fr. Lonergan turns to *De Veritate,* I, 9, as the peg on which to hang an epistemology which may be termed, he says, "Thomistic but hardly Thomist." [71] Hardly Thomist because, he intimates, Thomas did not specify the exact course of such a reflection of the mind on itself which, Thomas said, would show the mind's power to know the truth.

The above sentiments of Fr. Lonergan are from his series of articles in *Theological Studies* called, collectively, "The Concept of the Verbum in St. Thomas." [72] Nestled among articles on such topics as "The Hatred of the House of Annas" and the "Anti-Marcionite Prologues" we find that excellent review's only serious flirtation with epistemology. Fr. Lonergan calls these articles a parallel historical investigation [73] to *Insight.* But my attempts to analyse the problems of the articles in the light of the reflections in *Insight* have caused me some trouble. But then, Fr. Lonergan had said that the exegesis of *De Veritate* I, 9, was "hazardous." "Aquinas himself did not offer an account of the procedure he would follow; . . ." [74] Other writers have thought that *De Veritate* I, 9, does offer

[69] *Theological Studies,* VIII (1947) 60.
[70] *Insight,* p. 70.
[71] *Loc. cit.*
[72] Five articles were published between 1947 and 1949: VII (1946) 349-392; VIII (1947) 35-79, 404-444; X (1949) 3-40, 359-393.
[73] *Insight,* p. xv.
[74] *Theological Studies,* XIII (1947) 70.
[75] *Loc. cit.*

the procedure but what would seem to be the procedure suggested in the passage is a procedure that would not be possible for Fr. Lonergan. As we have seen, in keeping with his theory of consciousness

> the critical problem . . . is not a problem of moving from within outwards, of moving from a subject to an object outside the subject. It is a problem of moving from above downwards, of moving from an infinite potentiality commensurate with the universe [by this he means that intellect is *potens omnia facere et fieri*] towards a rational apprehension that seizes the difference of subject and object in essentially the same way that it seizes any other real distinction.[76]

To me this remark is pure mysticism. I simply don't know what Fr. Lonergan is talking about. Somehow, he says, " intellectual light reflectively grasps its own nature and a commensuration of that own nature to the universe of reality." [77] Intellect

> is not merely aware empirically of its acts but also reflects upon their nature; to know the nature of its acts, it has to know the nature of their active principle, which it itself is; and if it knows its own nature, intellect also knows its own proportion to knowledge of reality. . . . In knowing, we go outside ourselves; in reflecting we return in upon ourselves . . . the intellectual substance returns in upon itself completely . . . it penetrates to its own essence.[78]

Once again, I do not know what this passage means. But I mean, at least, to discuss the exegesis of *De Veritate* I, 9, which is given by such scholastics as Domet de Vorges, Léon Noël, Etienne Gilson, and Jacques Maritain, an exegesis which (except for the participation school) has become dominant in the twentiety century.

Fr. Georges Van Riet who now holds the Chair of Epistemology at Louvain has noted that *De Veritate* I, 9, has been employed by scholastic epistemologists since well before the

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 73.
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 72. This passage is a reference to *De Ver.*, I, 9.
[78] *Ibid.*, p. 61. This passage refers to *De Ver.*, I, 9.

turn of the century, but he holds that it did not become classic until 1924.[79] It is, therefore, a bit surprising to read in Fr. Lonergan, as if he were exclaiming *Eureka,* "Now there happens to be a text in which Aquinas did maintain that our knowledge of truth is derived from our knowledge of ourselves. . . ." [80] The long dialogue over the meaning of our famous passage has, in the main, to decide whether or not Aquinas meant one of two things. When St. Thomas said that the intellect can know its capacity for truth by reflecting on itself, did he mean that reflection (a) in the sense of thinking about intellectual power, or (b) in the sense of noting actual cases in which the intellect conforms to things? The first way in esoteric and mystical to me. The second must seem plain, even crass, to many people. But it seems to me that since, in the *De Veritate,* the topic under discussion is "truth," and the definition of truth, then as now, is the adequation of the mind to the thing, that the antecedent likelihood is that the mind knows it is capable of truth when it happens to catch itself in the act, red-handed. My conception of Thomistic psychology is that the intellect has no direct intuition of itself anyway. It is a power of the soul, and the soul has no direct intuition of itself.

But as far as Fr. Lonergan is concerned, intellect knows its own proportion *not* to reality but "to knowledge of reality." [81] Fr. Lonergan is committed to the "ego-centric predicament," hence we cannot know things, we must know knowledge. The exegesis of *De Veritate* I, 9, must become "hazardous" for him. But it has not seemed so to others. Among some thirty-odd comments I have seen on the passage, the most relevant, here, would be a calm discussion of it between Msgr. Léon Noël and Fr. Roland-Gosselin. The latter as if speaking for Fr. Lonergan said that for St. Thomas there was

[79] *L'épistémologie thomiste,* p. 432, n. 1.

[80] *Theological Studies,* VIII (1947) 60. This, also, is a reference to *De Ver.,* I, 9.

[81] *Ibid.* See the passage referred to in note 78.

a return of the intelligence on its very nature independently of any new turning toward [*regard vers*] the object . . . the *visi cognita* and the *visi cognoscatur* certainly have a causal sense as we are assured by what comes a little later [in *De Veritate* I, 9] (*quamvis enim . . . veritatem ejus*). Moreover, if it is true that the reflection, in attaining the mental verb, is naturally extended to the object expressed by it which is in it immediately present to the intelligence [*la réflexion atteignant le verbe mental se prolonge naturellement jusqu'à l'object exprimé par lui, lequel est en lui immédiatement présent à l'intelligence*], it seems to me no less certain that a comparison established between the verb and the object could not be of any critical utility, since we never know of the object more than the very thing that the verb expresses; neither could such a comparison of a thing with itself have been intended by St. Thomas searching in the mind for an activity entirely distinct from the object, there to found the relation of truth . . . [On the interpretation of Msgr. Noël] we conclude comparing only the judgment with the apprehension.[82]

Once again we have a very subtle presentation of the ego-centric predicament. Fr. Roland-Gosselin is trying to save St. Thomas from being interpreted as having said anything so simple-minded as that a thing can be compared with itself.

Even given a non-representative theory of perception the partisans of the ego-centric predicament have a quite legitimate fear. If I hold my hand in front of my face and form the concept *polydactyl* of it, I may then assert the judgment, " This hand is polydactyl." I have formed the concept and then applied it to the hand. But the judgment partakes of some of the characteristics of a definition. The way my hand is, is what I mean by *polydactyl*. What is the use of looking at my hand again to see if it is polydactyl, if what I mean by polydactyl is precisely the way my hand will look if I look at it. Those who fear that thought can't be compared with things are thinking of such cases as this. These judgments which involve concept formation as well as judgment seem also to involve the

[82] *Bulletin Thomiste*, (May 1926), p. 82.

fiat of a definition. We *decide* to call the condition of having more than five fingers *polydactylism.* How can we, then, possibly find out through some supposed comparison of thought and things, whether or not such a condition is in fact *polydactylism.* We can not criticize a definition because a definition partakes of the nature of an imperative, e. g., call this condition *polydactylism.*

However, what Msgr. Noël and the ordinary Thomists mean by the comparison of the thought and the thing is something quite as simple as this pseudo-comparison but of immensely different critical value. Suppose that, in my entire lifetime, I have never consciously adverted to the number of fingers on my other hand. And suppose, further, that I assert, without first looking at that other hand, that "It is polydactyl." The case is different; if I can see my hand in front of my face, I can find out whether I have spoken the truth of it. *De Veritate* I, 9, intends something just this simple, most Thomists maintain.

But suppose you can know only knowledge and you can't know things directly. Suppose, as some do, that you can't see your hand in front of your face. (The man in the street would be shocked to learn that this is the essential contention of perhaps most modern and contemporary non-realist epistemology). Maritain noted how shocked Kant and Descartes would be with St. Thomas for authoring the "incomprehensible scandal, the very idea of the grasp of the being of things independent of us. . . ." [83] And it is along this line that Msgr. Noël fights it out with Fr. Roland-Gosselin, he retorts

The intelligence, on the other hand, does inform itself of that conformity which escapes the senses. It can inform itself because it penetrates the nature of that which it does. But since what is involved

[83] *Réflexions sur l'intelligence et sur sa vie propre* (Paris, 1924), p. 25.

is a *conformity* how can the intelligence inform itself of it without also envisaging the other term of the relation, the thing.[84]

It seems to me that the passage itself is clear enough. In fact, it is the case historically that just such passages as *De Veritate* I, 9, *Summa Theologiae* I, 85, 2, and I, 16, 2 (where St. Thomas speaks of truth, judgment, and perception) were what convinced the scholastic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that there could be such a thing as a Thomistic epistemology.

The intellect reflects on itself, but in what way? If Fr. Mulligan, has correctly translated *De Veritate* I, 9, it reads

> And truth is known by the intellect in view of the fact that the intellect reflects on its own act, not merely as knowing its own act, but as knowing the proportion of its act to the thing. Now this proportion can not be known without knowing the nature of the act; and the nature of the act can not be known without knowing the nature of the active principle, that is, the intellect itself, to whose nature it belongs to conform to things.[85]

Is the passage open to the interpretation that the intellect can know of its capacity to know the truth by some sort of inward gaze, of self-communing?

First will be presented the common interpretation and then the proof positive that it is Thomistic. This passage is com-

[84] *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, XXV (1925) 185, n. 2, being a discussion of the intention of *De Ver.*, I, 9. In commenting on Fr. C. Boyer's article, "Les sens d'un texte de Saint Thomas: *De Veritate I, 9*," in *Gregorianum*, V (1924) 424-443, Fr. R. Kremer wrote in the *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, XXII (1924) 206, that ". . . scientific epistemology has no task beyond making explicit this reflection [mentioned by Fr. Boyer, on the conformity of the judgment and the thing] which is found confusedly in every judgment." Fr. Lonergan says just the opposite of *De Veritate* 1, 9, in *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947) 61, "I can not take this passage as solely an affirmation of the reflective character found in every judgment." The point originally made in 1924 by Fr. Boyer is repeated in almost the exact words at the Thomistic Congress of 1937. See *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, XXXV (1937) 148.

[85] *On Truth*, tr. R. Mulligan *et al.* (Chicago, 1952).

monly interpreted as contending that we can see that it is the nature of intellect to conform to things because we can see the conformity which it is capable of. Truth is the conforming judgment. It is not the judgment but the conformation which is the priceless epistemological ingredient. The plain sense of the passage is that this priceless ingredient can be seen. The mind can see the thing and it can thus see that its judgment conforms, that its word is good. We can see that it is the nature of the active principle to conform using the axiom, activity follows nature.

It helps to distinguish the order of being from the order of knowledge. In discussing *operatio sequitur esse,* Aristotle pointed out that, certainly, the moon waxes as it does because it *is* spherical. But in the order of knowledge, we know that the moon is spherical because we know the way that it waxes. Now in the order of being it is most plainly true that the principle of the act of knowledge, the intellect, conforms because it is its nature to conform. But in the order of knowledge, we know that the nature of the principle of the act of knowledge is to conform because we see that it does conform.

Would St. Thomas say this? He has to. He writes that "truth resides in the intellect composing and dividing." [86] In every proposition the intellect "either applies to, or removes from the thing signified by the subject, some form signified by the predicate." [87]

> . . . the intellect . . . must be true according as it has the likeness of the thing known . . . to know this likeness is to know truth. . . . But the intellect can know its own conformity to the intelligible being . . . when it judges that a thing corresponds to the form which it apprehends about that thing.[88]

[86] *Summa Theol.*, I, 16, 2.

[87] *Loc. cit.*

[88] *Loc. cit.* The standard, in judgment, is not the thing for Fr. Lonergan's Aquinas. ". . . his [i. e., Aquinas'] standard was neither the thing-in-itself and so as unknown, nor was it some inner representation of the thing-in-

I have not gone to St. Thomas' *Commentary on the Book of Job* or to his work on *The Sentences of Peter Lombard* written when he was twenty-nine, but to the same place where the ordinary Thomist goes, to the *ex professo* statement given in his maturest writing, to the place where the question he is discussing is, "Whether truth resides only in the intellect composing and dividing."

In his maturity, Aquinas explicitly devotes a whole question to what must have seemed at the time a trivial point to many of his readers. It was the question of whether you can see your hand in front of your face. "Whether the intelligible species abstracted from phantasms are related to our intellect as that which is understood?"

I answer that, some have asserted that the intellectual powers know only the impressions made on them; as, for example, that sense is cognizant only of the impression made on its own organ. According to this theory, the intellect understands only its own impressions, namely the intelligible species which it has received,

This is, however, manifestly false for two reasons. First because the things we understand are also the objects of science. Therefore, if what we understood is merely the intelligible species in the soul, it would follow that every science would be concerned, not with things outside the soul, but only with the intelligible species within the soul. . . .

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itself coming to the aid of the first in a futile and superfluous effort to be helpful." Fr. M. O'Connell, S. J., has implied that Fr. Lonergan should prefer the *ex professo* statement in Aquinas for his exegesis. He claimed that Fr. Lonergan is guilty of "absolute misstatement" and of using out-of-context "verbal concordances" to support his personal hypotheses. See *The Modern Schoolman*, XXIV (1947) 233, 234. The quote from Fr. Lonergan regarding Aquinas found in this footnote is from *Theological Studies*, VIII (1947) 47.

Fr. J. Albertson, S. J., makes a criticism of *Insight's* philosophy of sciences, which criticism has an epistemological caste related to our present point. He wrote what *Insight* is, in whole or part, important dense, profound, trenchant, careful, probing, overwritten, unclear and long. Its philosophy of science is based on a failure to make the fundamental distinction between the intelligibility immanent in and that imposed on things. See *The Modern Schoolman*, XXXV (1958) 238, 240.

Secondly, it is untrue, because it would lead to the opinion of the ancients who maintained that whatever seems, is true. . . .[89]

These two considerations are mere *argumenta ad vertiginem.* They frighten more than prove. But they do show conclusively what Aquinas meant. He goes on later in the article to assert that the species are not that which we know but that by which we know. That which is known first is the thing. ". . . *id quod intelligitur primo est res.*" [90]

This immediate realism was presented as Thomistic in 1892 by Domet de Vorges, in 1913 by Léon Noël, and later by Gilson and Maritain among others. In 1927, commenting specifically on the relation between the *De Veritate* I, 9, and the *Summa Theologiae* I, 16, 2, Noël wrote that

In the judgment the mind, after having isolated them [the concepts] compares them to the subject [i. e., the thing] . . . this comparison is the first source of conscious truth and I have believed it legitimate to look there for the ultimate foundation of epistemology.[91]

This method is patently, a simple one. The ordinary Thomist of the twentieth century takes it, also, to be Thomistic.

Conclusion

Insight is full of crisp, penetrating reflections on depth psychology, neo-Freudianism, Lindsay and Margenau's *Foundations of Physics,* set theory, philosophy of science, the psychology of faith, the history of philosophy, symbolic logic, and

[89] *Ibid.*, I, 85, 2 in c.

[90] *Loc. cit.*

[91] *Revue Philosophique de Louvain,* XXV (1927) 184. The possibility of such a comparison "puzzles" Fr. Lonergan (*Theological Studies,* VIII [1947] 47) because according to his conception of the nature of consciousness it is a psychic enclosure. Of *Summa Theol.*, I, 16, 2, Fr. G. Van Riet writes that ". . . that reflection, included in the judgment itself is a comparison by which is manifested the vital dependence or the identity of the meaning expressed by the predicate with the existent real signified by the subject." See the *Revue Philosophique de Louvain,* XLVI (1948).

the calculus of probabilities, to mention a few.[92] It has moved me in many ways. But it has not moved me to think that Aquinas was a Platonist. The Angelic Doctor has been dead and analysed long enough to make most Thomists say he meant a participation in, not ideas but, an ability to form them when he wrote that, " The human soul is called intellectual by reason of a participation in an intellectual power, . . ."

If I have misunderstood Fr. Lonergan, it will not come as a surprise to him. He has, I suspect, forgiven me in advance. An originator ". . . sanguine enough to believe that [he has] . . . hit upon a set of ideas of fundamental importance," [94] this learned Jesuit does not crave to become a " week-end celebrity."

> The original genius, precisely because he is original, finds all current usage inept for his purposes and succeeds remarkably if there is any possibility of grasping his meaning from his words; the possibility of exact expression of a philosophic position only arises long after the philosopher's death when his influence has moulded the culture which is the background and vehicle of such expression.[95]

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[92] Fr. F. Crowe, S. J., has appended to *Insight* a fine-type, seventy column " Index " which, a labor of love, is a most excellent guide to the these most excellent contents.

[93] *Summa Theol.*, I, 79, 4 in c.

[94] *Insight*, p. xxx.

[95] *Theological Studies*, VII (1946) 371. I note that other comments on Fr. Lonergan have appeared. F. Crowe, S. J., " The Origin and Scope of Bernard Lonergan's *Insight*," *Science Ecclésiastique*, IX (1957) 263-295. J. de Finance, S. J., *Gregorianum*, XXXIX (1958) 130-136. I. Hale, " Intelligence and Some Philosophers," *Downside Review*, LXXVII (Winter 1958-1959) 72-81. L. Roy, *Science Ecclésiastique*, I (1948) 225-228. F. V., *Bull. Théol. Anc. Med.*, V (1948) 335, sec. 980.

Benda's Attack on Bergson

by Lawrence S. Stepelevich

IT IS NO exaggeration to say that the new philosophy of Henri Bergson, in the early years of the twentieth century, gave all indications of being a permanent revolution in philosophic thought. Even William James, who was not usually given to displays of unqualified praise, saw Bergson in the role of a magician who would most assuredly be one of the greatest creative thinkers in the history of philosophy. From the fashionable salons, from the political arena in which Sorel fought, and from the neo-naturalists in religious speculation came glowing words of admiration and appreciation for the gift of Bergson. However, the new excitement of the Great War, coupled with Bergson's silence, saw the decline of his direct influence upon the thinking public. Even the long-awaited and unheralded publication of *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*[1] in 1932 failed to insure a lasting popularity of Bergsonism. Its initial success did neither prevail nor endure. In the words of Irwin Edman,

> His popularity with the general literate public vanished almost as quickly as it had appeared. As for the professional philosophers whose admiration had always been tinctured with critical reserve, these now found more to criticize and, what was perhaps more decisive, began to think in other terms about other problems.[2]

However, this might lead one to think that Bergsonism fell from favor more from neglect than from positive philosophic criticism. This was hardly the case. Almost from the beginning

[1] H. Bergson, *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion* (Paris, 1932).

[2] H. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, tr. A. Mitchell (New York, 1944) p. xi.

there were two sources of continued and incisive opposition to the doctrines of Bergson. One of these attacks was directed by a former Bergsonian, Jacques Maritain. With one book, *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism,*[3] Maritain destroyed any hopes that the Bergsonians might have had concerning a *rapproachement* with a resurgent Neo-Thomism. The other attack was conducted by one man alone, Julien Benda. It began with his publication of *Le Bergsonisme ou une philosophie de la mobilité,*[4] which was published in 1912, and continued until his death in 1956. His stern criticisms of Bergson employed every possible means, from the purely speculative to direct personal attack.

It is of interest here to note that without the negative stimulus afforded to him by Bergson's thought, Benda would have hardly developed his own position. It was only in opposition to Bergson that Benda found it necessary to re-enforce his own native inclinations to philosophic reactionism. In order to counteract the influx of the evolutionary doctrines that were infiltrating the thought of his day, Benda sought out positive positions from Spinoza, Renouvier, and Kant. If Bergson would attack Kant, Benda would defend Kant, and by so doing would become more and more closely allied with essentialistic and rationalistic philosophy. In brief, the philosophic position to which Benda finally reached was one which was purely rationalistic, denying all intuitive modes of valid knowledge. In it, static ideas were the tools of philosophic investigation and not that process wherein " one must get back into duration and recapture reality in the very mobility which is its essence." [5]

Benda's attack on Bergson—it is better to use the term " attack " rather than " critique " in view of the violent manner

[3] J. Maritain, *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism.* Reprint. (New York, 1955).

[4] J. Benda, *Le Bergsonisme, ou une philosophie de la mobilité* (Paris, 1912).

[5] H. Bergson, *The Creative Mind* (New York, 1946) p. 31.

in which it was often conducted—can be analyzed into three distinct modes. The first of these attacks is directed against the speculative principles of the Bergsonian system. The second considers the social forces which facilitated the rapid spread of Bergsonism, and the third is designed to reveal the cultural collapse which would result from the consistent application of Bergson's doctrines. For the sake of clarity, this paper will trace each of these forms of criticism separately and in order.

Benda's intense personal dislike of Bergsonism prevents him from ever conducting a truly extended philosophic critique. Again and again what sets out at first to be a speculative investigation ends up as a polemic. Nevertheless, in several of his works he does attack the notion of *durée* and intuition, from his own basic premise that life and idea are incommensurable. As he notes,

> A science of life—an *idea* about life—is another thing than life; as, according to the lucid phrase of Spinoza, the circle is one thing, the idea of a circle another thing which has neither center nor periphery.[6]

The great error of Bergson is to confuse life with idea for " where he stated scientific views on life, he did it by conceptual propositions, and not at all by a dim fusion with life." [7] Hence, Bergson always had to betray his own notion of intuition and seek truth by rational discursion. The intuition of one's own *durée* is not only useless as a tool for the enlargement of human knowledge, it is even a debasement of man:

> This faculty of the mind—the faculty to create, in order to understand reality, forms which contain it ever more closely but are by nature different from it—far from seeming contemptible to me, is mankind's

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[6] J. Benda, *Trois idoles romantiques* (Geneva, 1948) p. 26: " Une science de la vie—une *idée* sur la vie—est un tout autre chose que la vie; que, selon la lumineuse parole de Spinoza, le cercle est un chose, l'idée du cercle un autre chose que n'a pas de centre ni de périphérie."

[7] *Ibid.*: " Où il énonce des vues scientifiques sur la vie, le fait par un proposition de concepts, nullemente par un fusion aveugle avec la vie."

great claim to nobility, which the expectation of grasping reality in itself seems to me by contrast a simple-minded, even somewhat ridiculous, ambition.[8]

Thus, to Benda, intuition is "blind," and the notion of *durée* is meaningless. In *Trois idoles romantiques,* the attempts of the Bergsonians to describe *durée* or the intuition of it as a "*distendant,*" "*dilatant,*" a making of it into a "*se renverser,*" is to Benda simply "pathetic."[9] To construct a system out of these elements is philosophic madness, and it encouraged Benda to investigate the reasons why such a philosophy as Bergsonism attained the popular appeal that it had. To conclude then, Benda is nonsubjective, nonindividualistic, and nonempirical in his approach to philosophical truth. Bergson, allegedly, rests his case on the contrary approach. Benda claims that ideas distort reality and yet are fully capable of logically expressing the essential structure of reality. Bergson, on the contrary denies that the intellect alone can be employed for speculative use. One must employ intuition. Benda's principal argument against Bergson is *ad hominem,* that is, the very concept of *durée* is static, and a static concept could never capture a "fluid" reality. "The idea of a dynamism, vital or otherwise, is not dynamic; the idea of becoming is not a becoming."[10]

Having rejected the speculative principles upon which Bergsonism was based, Benda was forced to answer the question of its immense popular appeal. The answer itself is rooted deeply in Benda's own philosophy. As his mind sought order, the "static" inherent in all things, so he tended to political ab-

[8] J. Benda: *Exercise d'un enterré vif* (Paris, 1945) pp. 27-28. "Cette faculté qu'a l'esprit de créer, pour comprendre la réalité des formes qui de plus en plus l'enserrent mais sont d'autre nature qu'elle, loin d'avoir mon mépris, me représente le grand titre de noblesse de la race humaine, alors qu'au contraire la prétention de saisir le réel en lui-meme me semble une ambition de primitif, voire quelque peu risible."

[9] J. Benda: *Trois idoles romantiques,* p. 47.

[10] *Ibid.* "L'idée d'un dynamisme, vital ou autre, n'est pas une dynamisme; l'idée d'un devenir n'est pas un devenir."

solutism. The rise of the proletariat and the gradual "democratization" of a Europe which was losing its order and structure in the whirlwind of social "progress" and egalitarianism instituted, among others, by Condorcet, Comte, and Rousseau, gave Benda his reason for the success of Bergsonianism. The progressive "vulgarization," as Benda terms it, has opened wide the doors of philosophy to anyone with or without training in the field. So, "the simply cultured man is closer to the truth, with his 'intuition,' than all the philosophers or savants with their pretended methods." [11]

To Benda, philosophy is not the property of anyone, and to "democratize" it is to destroy it. "Thought as a methodic activity of the spirit is unknown by the common man. He has indifference for it, often contempt, sometimes hatred. Not only thought, but the respect for thought, is the property of very few humans." [12] Bergson's success is hardly due to the speculative merit of his principles, but rather to the fact that he enabled everyone to become just as "professional" in the realm of philosophy as the "professionals." With intuition indefinable, and conceptual thought useless, the Bergsonians were just as secure in their own defense as they were sure of their attack. This is *La crise du rationalisme*,[13] for this "new thought" will not acknowledge arguments based on "static concepts" nor will they define what is meant by their own approach. There is yet another reason for the appeal of Bergsonism that springs from its being "la philosophie d'un démocratie," [14] and this is its pandering to those who seek sensation.

[11] J. Benda: *Du style d'idées* (Paris, 1948) p. 254. "L'homme simplement cultivé est plus proche de la vérité, avec son 'intuition,' que tous les philosophies ou savants avec leur prétendues méthodes."

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 255: "La penseé en tant qu'activité méthodique de l'esprit est inconnue du vulgaire. Il a pour elle de l'indifférence, souvent du mépris, parfois de la haine. Non seulement la pensée, mais le respect de la pensée, est le propre de très peu d'humains."

[13] J. Benda, *La crise du rationalisme* (Paris, 1949).

[14] J. Benda, *Sur le succès du bergsonisme* (Paris, 1912) p. 217-218.

To Benda it is the mob, broken free of the traditional restraint that the aristocracy had imposed upon it, who has sought "sensuality" [15] rather than truth in philosophy. It is the same mob which sees in philosophy

> . . . that infernal thing which finds what cannot be found, touches what cannot be touched, does what cannot be done. We see here once again that the notion the mob holds of this activity has remained unchanged over a thousand years; to them, the philosopher is still first cousin of the alchemist—they still hold of him that sacred view which gave to any undertaking without meaning the name *philosophical*.[16]

It is Bergson, the magician, who satisfied the would-be investigators of the *pur devenir* by revealing to them the passion of their time:

> *The passion to have an experience of the senses, or of the heart, by way of philosophical speculation.* If, following a usage that is plainly abusive yet generally accepted, we call *aristocracy* a society enamored of, or at least in awe before, conditions based on reason and nothing else, and *democracy* a society in search of sensation and nothing else—seeking it under all possible guises and along the strangest paths, and extolling it alone among all the states of the soul—we then may say that, just as Cartesianism has been the philosophy of aristocracy, Bergsonianism is strictly the philosophy of democracy.[17]

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[15] J. Benda, *Trois idoles romantiques*, p. 17.

[16] J. Benda, *Sur le succès du bergonisme*, p. 151: ". . . cette chose diabolique qui trouve l'Introubable, touche l'Intangible, réalise l'Impossible. Ici encore on voit que l'idée que la foule se fait de cette activité n'a pas dégénéré depuis dix siècles: le philosophe continue d'être pour elle le cousin de l'alchimist; elle continue d'en avoir cette conception sacrée qui faisait que les tentative insensées étaient dites *philosophales*."

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 217-218: "*La passion éprouver un état des sens ou du coeur par la spéculation philosophique.* Si l'on appelle, suivant une dénomination évidemment abusive mais généralement recue, *aristocratie* une société éprise ou du moins révérente des seuls états de raison, et *démocratie* une société en quête du seul sentir, qu'elle veut sous toutes ses formes possibles, qu'elle cherche aux voies les plus étranges, et que seul elle honore parmi les états d'âme, on peut dire que, de même que le Cartésianisme aura été la philosophie d'une aristocratie, le Bergonisme est rigoureusement la philosophie d'une démocratie."

Benda reveals himself as a member of that French school, rooted in Comte, who saw the sociological fact determining the philosophical doctrine.

Benda's prolonged and vitriolic attack on Bergson reached its greatest intensity when he set out to expose the extensive cultural chaos which would occur if Bergsonian principles were put into practice. In his later works Benda gave all indications that his worst fears had been confirmed. By 1948, when the *Trois idoles romantiques* was published, Benda saw the taint of Bergson's doctrines everywhere: they had penetrated into the heart of French culture and were at work destroying all rational endeavor not only in the realm of philosophy but on the aesthetic and moral level as well. It is in this later work that Benda carefully analyzed the cultural pattern for the purposes of revealing those areas which were most under the influence of the *pur devenir*. Each of these areas, in turn, was held up to be ridiculed and to be proven irrational.

Benda notes that the "religion du changement" expresses itself in two forms. In one way it could produce an "émotion douce," a feeling of "infinite sentimentality" which left the believer in a delicate state of suspended action, in a "dream" where all affirmation ceased in the face of a fascinating psychic *durée*.[18] Again, in its other form, it could just as easily produce the *émotion forte*, where all was caught up in the *élan vital*, and all became dynamic, forceful. It caused a sense of dynamic thrust which led one to ignore or to crush the intricate movement of reason in a desire for action alone.[19] Benda considers both of these forms in their unique influences upon the intellectual life, the aesthetic world, and the moral realm.

The Sybaritic *émotion douce* vitiates the intellectual life by making it "exempte d'affirmation." In this, "a sensation of intellectual tremulation"[20] replaces the scientific spirit. Here

[18] J. Benda, *Trois idoles romatiques*, p. 17. [19] *Ibid.* [20] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

the "new philosophy" of Bergson institutes "un science 'souple,'" that draws the philosopher off into a hazy and sensual dream world where all fixity vanishes in a "perpetual becoming" and concept softens to nuance.

In the moral realm all actions are confused, rendered neither good nor evil, and "with an abolition of effort" actions become meaningless. Bergsonian morality results in a pleasurable non-choice, "As a man who, in a room furnished with gambling tables, might go from one to another and perhaps find more pleasure interesting himself in all the games than in seizing upon one for profit." [21]

In the aesthetic order, a confusion is effected between "artistic being and being an artist." [22] This confusion of identifying the life of the artist, his own *durée,* with his work is but another "full manifestation of the romantic worship of life by opposing it to the *idea* of life." [23] Thus art itself, under the influence of the "émotion douce" becomes a "sensual delight which is the abolition of the distinct."

The "émotion forte" which is the "true religion of dynamism" affects the cultural realms in a far different way than the influence of that *ignis fatuus* produced by the *émotion douce.* Far from being a psychic saraband, this emotion induces one to action, action for the sake of action alone.

The false premise upon which all dynamism, particularly the vital dynamism of Bergson, rests is simply that the true "method of knowledge of life is to coincide with life." [24] By the confusion of life and the idea of life, the dynamists are easily led to identify knowledge with action. Hence, in the

[21] *Ibid.*: "Comme un homme qui, dans un salon garni de tables à jeux, irait de l'une à l'autre et trouverait plus de plaisir à s'intéresser à toutes les parties qu'à en mener une pour son compte."

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[23] *Ibid.*: "Manifestant à plein l'adoration romantique de la vie par opposition à *l'idéation.*"

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 25.: "méthode de connaissance de la vie est de coincider avec la vie."

philosophical realm, one must *experience* rather than *know* reality, and there is always present in this approach an explicit rejection of all intellectual endeavor. In order to express this experience the Bergsonian is, by force of his own *a priori* assumptions, made to seek expression through metaphor and nuance. However, as Benda notes, "Poetry is in no way scientific knowledge." [25] So-called "connatural knowledge" is again a disguised dynamism, for the "blind fusion" of thought and thing can result only in philosophic vagaries, the end result being a form of poetry, not philosophy.[26] Benda is not opposed to poetry *per se,* but he consistently rejects the appeal to seek in an art form that which should be sought more perfectly in philosophy. To Benda the terminology of writers such as Bergson and Nietzsche reveal them as being more poets than philosophers. Without concepts there can be no scientific knowledge, only emotion, *forte* or *douce.*

In the moral order life *triumphs* over idea when the "émotion forte" of dynamism is accepted. As life is identified by the Bergsonians as free or spontaneous evolution of the self, so dynamic morality sees virtue only in the expenditure of energy with an end in further growth. "The religion of dynamism consists in taking as its supreme value the desire for expansion, the wish *to be more.*" [27] It is the man of action, the "homme d'armes" who is the measure of virtue, and not the scholar or shop-keeper. In such a moral system "the morality of Attila would be as valuable as that of Saint Paul" for it would be inspired by "enthusiasm and lyricism." [28] The Bergsonians in the moral realm identify life with civilization, but "*Civilization is not life,*" [29] because it imposes a rationality upon the essential

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 31.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 48.: "La religion du dynamisme consiste à tenir pour valeur suprême l'appétit d'expansion, la volonté d'être plus."
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

"brutality" that life without the control of reason would always tend to. Man is more than life, he is rational, and to ignore his rationality is tantamount to reducing him to an animal. If this is truly what Benda perceived in Bergsonism, one can see just cause in his attack upon it.

Benda is most deeply concerned, if this can be inferred from the space he allots to this criticism, with the effect that the *émotion forte* had upon the literary world. No novice at turning a rhetorical phrase himself, Benda had also played the role of a literary critic more than once.[30] The hub of his critique rests upon the observed fact that writing has become an art divorced from reason and order. The vast influx of *l'écrit spontané,* with its continued concern with the intimate gyrations of the author's personal life, is but another influence of Bergsonianism. It too appeals to the popular mind, which has, according to Benda, a natural aversion to the discipline that reason would impart. They, the dynamists, such as Proust and Duhamel, would push all literature into poetic expression, a poetry without rhythm or form, a poetry whose only claim to being poetry would be that it was set forth in meter.[31]

In a brief study, such as this, it is not to the purpose, nor indeed is it possible, to give an adequate exposition of the philosophical position of Julien Benda. However, for those who wish to pursue the thought of Benda more deeply, the systematic and lucid work of Robert J. Niess, entitled *Julien Benda* can be profitably consulted.[32] It will suffice if we note that Benda was primarily a critic of certain cultural values, and not a metaphysician. In philosophy he was, at best, an accomplished eclectic, who expediently borrowed doctrines from such diverse

[30] See Benda, *La France byzantine* (Paris, 1939) and *Du poétique* (Geneva, 1936).

[31] *Op cit.*, p. 79.

[32] R. Niess, *Julien Benda* (Ann Arbor, 1956).

thinkers as Spinoza, Kant, Renouvier, and, at rare intervals, St. Thomas.[33]

His reputation, from the beginning, was more sustained by his critics than by the intrinsic worth of his system. Although Bergson himself never replied to Benda's charges, others did, and many pages of the *Mercure de France* and the *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* were directed against "ce diable d'homme."[34]

Even the kindest reviews of Benda's works were never without a degree of animus. For example, Michel Seuphor concludes one of few favorable reviews by noting that although Benda's efforts were, "en général . . . bienfaisante," nevertheless the notoriety of the author precluded any likelihood of their success.[35]

But favorable reviews were always exceptional, and most French thinkers were one with the opinion of André Rousseaux who simply entitled a study: "Julien Benda, ou l'homme sans coeur."[36]

Let it be granted that he was "sans coeur." Yet, despite his lack of a consistent philosophical basis, his lack of admirers, and his unorthodox way of conducting a philosophical critique—coupling personal invective with Byzantian detachment—there is something to be learned from him. He did have the courage to resist the whole movement of his time when he sensed that it was directed against the dignity of man. Those Thomists who would risk their scholastic heritage in order to be exalted as *avant-garde* can take this lesson in courage from Julien Benda.

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[33] J. Benda, *Du style d'idées*, p. 188.

[34] A. Ouy, "Julien Benda, ou l'intellectualisme militant," *Mercure de France*, No. 1018 (June, 1948) 368.

[35] M. Seuphor, "Pour et Contra Benda," *La Vie Intellectuelle* (January, 1946) 141.

[36] Andre Rousseaux, *Littérature du vingtième siècle* (Vol. 1; Paris, 1938) I.

DISCUSSION:

Who is the Platonic Philosopher King?

by Anton-Hermann Chroust

It is not unreasonable to suppose that Plato, when describing his philosopher king,[1] actually had some living contemporary philosopher or sage in mind. As a matter of fact, it can be shown that he considered himself destined to be the ideal philosopher king or guardian of the perfect City—the only man worthy of guiding the destiny of the ideal City. But owing to the "forces of evil" he was prevented from assuming and enjoying this exalted position.

In his lengthy and perhaps chatty discussion of the basic traits that are characteristic of the true philosopher and, incidentally, of the philosopher king, Plato definitely alludes to some historical persons:

> Will not such a person, he insists, from his early childhood be first among all people in all things, especially in [the kind of] friends[2] [he has], as well as in his physical endowments? . . . Will not his fellow citizens flatter him and make great demands upon him? . . . Will he not be full of boundless aspirations, and fancy himself capable of managing the affairs of both Greeks and Barbarians alike . . . ? But when he is in this state of mind, and if some gentle person should come to him and tell him that he is a fool sorely in need of true understanding . . . — if someone through the use of innate goodness or natural reasonableness should open his eyes . . . and win him over to philosophy[3] . . . will not his friends . . . do everything to prevent him from yielding to his better nature and thus render his teacher ineffective . . . ? Under those circumstances how can a man ever become a [true] philosopher? . . . The very qualities which turn a man into a [true] philosopher may, if he is badly educated, divert him from philosophy. . . . And so philosophy is being deserted: her very own have fallen away and forsaken her.[4]

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[1] Plato, *Republic* 473D; 484A ff.; 487E; 498E ff.; 500D ff.; 501E ff.; 540A ff.; Plato (?), *Seventh Epistle* 326AB. Cf. here also A.-H. Chroust, "A Second (and Closer) Look at Plato's Political Philosophy," to appear in *The Thomist Reader*.

[2] See here also *Republic* 486C ff. The importance of having the "right friends" when aspiring to the position of philosopher king is stressed once more in Plato (?), *Seventh Epistle* 325CD. Naturally, as in the case of Alcibiades, the "wrong friends" may alienate a man from true philosophy and thus disqualify him from becoming the king philosopher. See *infra*.

[3] This "someone" is Socrates. See note 5, *infra*.

[4] Plato, *Republic* 494C-495C.

Obviously, the person described here is none other than Alcibiades who, despite Socrates' valiant efforts to "save him for [true] philosophy," ultimately deserts her and, hence, becomes wholly unworthy of her.[5] "Thus philosophy is left desolate . . ."[6] and "only a handful of men remain worthy of being associated with philosophy,"[7] namely, Socrates,[8] Theages[9] and, finally, Plato himself. With Theages out of the picture and with Socrates having properly disqualified himself,[10] there remains only

> a noble and well educated person, saved for philosophy [and kept in her service] through flight [or exile], who in the absence of corrupting influence [which made Alcibiades unworthy] remains devoted to her—a lofty soul born in a mean city, the politics of which he condemns and in the political actions of which he does not participate . . .,[11]

especially since he "belongs to that small circle of persons who have tasted how sweet and blessed the possession of [true] philosophy is,

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[5] The lost "dialogue" *Alcibiades* of Aeschines (which is influenced by the *Alcibiades* of Antisthenes) essentially repeats and corroborates the story that Socrates (the "someone" unmistakably is Socrates, see note 3, *supra*) tried to save Alcibiades for philosophy. For this whole problem cf. A.-H. Chroust, *Socrates: Man and Myth, The Two Socratic Apologies of Xenophon* (London, 1957) 175 ff.

[6] Plato, *Republic* 496C.

[7] Plato, *Republic* 496B.

[8] This may be gathered from Socrates' statement: "The internal sign in my own case [which called me to the position of philosopher king] I consider hardly worth mentioning." Plato, *Republic* 496C. But Socrates continues: ". . . hardly, if ever, has such a sign been given to any other man."

[9] Plato, *Republic* 496C: "Everything in the life of Theages conspired to alienate him from philosophy. But ill health kept him out of politics." Theages of Athens (not to be confounded with the Pythagorean Theages of Croton) was the son of Demodocus, the brother of Paralus, and a disciple of Socrates. According to Plato, *Apology* 33A, he died before Socrates. The pseudo-Platonic dialogue *Theages*, in which Socrates, Theages and Demodocus are the main actors, in a way is related to Plato, *Republic* 495A and *Republic* 496BC, in that it discusses the relationship of philosophy to politics.—The particular reasons why Plato should single out Theages for the signal honor of being worthy to become the philosopher king, are unknown. All we know is that he belonged to a wealthy aristocratic family, that he was "interested" in philosophy, and that he died at a relatively early age.

[10] Cf. note 8, *supra*.

[11] Plato, *Republic* 496B.

and who also have seen enough of the madness of the masses, and the general corruption of all politicians." [12]

We know that shortly after the trial of Socrates (399 B. C.) Plato, together with other Socratic friends and disciples, fled (or went into voluntary exile) to Megara where for a while he found refuge with Eucleides. Thus in a way he was "saved for philosophy" or, at least, saved from sharing in the fate that befell Socrates, although there exists no evidence whatever that he (or his friends) was in any danger of being "prosecuted" for his philosophical or political views. The Act of Oblivion of 403, which granted full amnesty to all people involved in the "revolution" of the Thirty Tyrants, should make this quite clear, provided Plato was at all involved in this revolution.[13] We also know from the *Seventh Epistle*,[14] which supposedly contains some biographical or autobiographical data, that Plato in his youth was "moved by the desire to take an active part in public life and politics." [15] The fate of Socrates (and the experiences of the Thirty

[12] Plato, *Republic* 496C. See also Plato (?), *Seventh Epistle* 325C ff.: ". . . our City was no longer governed according to the standards and practices of our fathers. . . . Our written laws and unwritten customs were being corrupted at a frightening rate of speed. The result was that I, who at first had been full of eagerness for a political career, as I gazed upon the turmoil of public life and saw the incessant confusion of shifting currents, at last felt dizzy . . . and finally realized in regard to all cities now existing that without exception their system of government is bad. Their constitution is almost beyond redemption."

[13] The evidence on this point is not altogether conclusive. In Plato (?), *Seventh Epistle* 324CD, Plato (?) frankly admits that some of his relatives and acquaintances were invloved in this revolution of the Thirty Tyrants, and that he too had been "invited" actively to join in this "Movement." "Being as young as I then was," Plato avers, "it is not surprising that I should cherish the belief that they [the Thirty Tyrants] would lead the City from an unjust life . . . to the ways of justice. . . . So I became intensely interested in their plans. . . ." This statement would indicate that at least for a while Plato was in sympathy (and perhaps connected) with the actions of the Thirty Tyrants, as were some of his closest relatives. We also know that Plato admired Critias, the leader of the Thirty Tyrants. Cf. Plato, *Laws* 710D, where Plato seems fully to approve of Critias' methods, but blames the ultimate failure of this regime on the fact that their number was too great. Critias alone, Plato insinuates, would have been fine. In the *Seventh Epistle* 324D ff., however, he seems to reject the actions of the Thirty Tyrants.

[14] The *Seventh Epistle* may be the authentic work of Plato. The question of authenticity, which is still hotly debated, however does not seriously affect its source value.

[15] *Seventh Epistle* 325AB.

Tyrants as well as their unconscionable deeds), at least for awhile, seems to have somewhat dampened[16] his enthusiasm for politics, as did the general and apparently hopeless "corruption" in the political life of fourth century Athens.[17] Nevertheless, in his own words, he "kept waiting for favorable opportunities."[18]

But, according to Plato's own account, there were many and serious obstacles in his path to "philosophical royalty": A philosopher, who lives in a world frantically hostile to true philosophy is

> like a man who has fallen among wild beasts. He will not participate in the wicked acts of the multitude, but neither is his power sufficient single-handedly to continue his fight, surrounded, as he is, by a world of fierce savages. Realizing that he would be of no use to the City or to his friends, and reflecting that he would have to throw away his own life without doing any good either to himself or to others, he will hold his peace and go his own way. He is like one who . . . in a driving storm . . . retires under the shelter of a wall. Seeing the rest of mankind full of wickedness he is content if he can only live his own life . . . and depart in peace and good-will, with bright hopes.[19]

Needless to say, a note of deep resentment underlies these haughty remarks: the wickedness of the world prevents Plato from assuming the position of philosopher king to which he considers himself pre-eminently qualified if not actually destined. But he is personally too proud to seek this position and actively to contend for it by his own efforts. As a matter of fact, he is naive enough to insist that the world must come begging to his doorstep and put this position at his feet.[20]

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[16] Naturally, it is quite possible that owing to his involvement with the Thirty Tyrants (*Seventh Epistle* 324CD, see also note 13, *supra*), the Athenian people never cared to entrust Plato with any public office, and this at a time when approximately every fourth citizen held some kind of public office. Hence Plato's own explanation for his failure to enter actively into the political life of Athens might be somewhat "euphemistic."

[17] *Seventh Epistle* 325B ff.

[18] *Seventh Epistle* 326A. The *Seventh Epistle* (325C ff.) not only corroborates *Republic* 496C ff., but also makes it quite plain that the "noble and well educated person" of *Republic* 496B, who is the sole remaining "candidate" for the office of philosopher king, is none other than Plato himself.

[19] Plato, *Republic* 496C ff.

[20] There exist some wholly unauthenticated reports that Plato received several "invitations" to assume the political leadership in a number of cities. Plutarch, *Ad principem ineruditum* 779D (and Aelian, *Variae Historiae* 12.30), relates that the people of Cyrene extended such an invitation to Plato; and Diogenes Laertius 3.23 (and Aelian, *op. cit.*, at 2.42),

He even believes that one day the world would do this. Then, and then only, will be condescend to become the philosopher king:

> The skilled pilot [the philosopher king, ***note by the author***] should not humbly entreat the unskilled sailors to put themselves under his command, nor should the wise man [Plato, ***note by the author***] wait at the door of the rich. . . . The true and natural course of things is that the sick,[21] whether rich or poor, shall call upon the physician. He who wishes to be ruled should hasten to the door of him who can rule. But never should a ruler, who is good for anything, beg them to accept his rule. . . .[22]

That Plato was as ambitious as he was vain is not only attested by his own writings[23] but also by his various schemes to "reform" Syracuse and to win over for his ideas Dion and the two Dionysii. Although on occasion he seems to condemn ambition,[24] his whole life was determined by a nearly pathological desire to play the decisive role in the political affairs of Athens and Syracuse. This desire he tried to "cover up" to some extent by insisting that the true philosopher knows no ambition; and although he is destined to rule, "he is the least eager to rule"[25]—a statement which he himself disproved by his actions. The philosopher's status is too exalted, Plato continued, to permit him

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records that the Arcadians and Thebans invited him to become the "lawgiver" of the newly founded city of Megalopolis. See also Plato (?), *Eleventh Epistle*, where additional "invitations" of this kind are mentioned. Tradition has it, however, that Plato turned down all these offers.

[21] Plato frequently compares people who are not ruled by true philosophers with sick people. He also compares the philosopher with the physician of mentally and morally sick people.

[22] Plato, *Republic* 489BC. Cf. *Statesman* 300A ff.

[23] Cf., for instance, Plato, *Republic* 368A, where Plato calls his father and brother "divine"; Plato, *Symposium* 208D, where Plato claims to be a direct descendant of King Codrus; Plato, *Charmides* 157E, *Critias* 113A, and *Timaeus* 20E, where Plato claims to be a descendant of Dropides, one of the old tribal kings of Attica; Plato, *Republic* 502A, where Plato unmistakably refers to himself when he states: "Who will doubt that possibility that kings [Codrus (?), Dropides (?), ***note by the author***] or aristocrats may have a descendant who is a born philosopher"?; Plato, *Republic* 499B ff., where Plato insists that only "if the sons of kings or princes [and is he not the descendant of kings?, ***note by the author***] are inspired with the genuine love of true philosophy" . . . they would become "rulers of the City."

[24] What Plato actually condemns, not to say despises, are the "vulgar" ambitions of ordinary people.

[25] Plato, *Republic* 520B ff.

to be ambitious, but he may "sacrifice" himself for his lesser (and really undeserving) fellow men or for the City, and condescend to rule the "poor people" who need his rule. In other words, if we could believe Plato, the (Platonic) philosopher has no ambition whatever, but in a pesudo-messianic spirit of self-sacrifice he will "lower" himself and, as the "natural ruler," will upon request come and "liberate" the people from the greatest of all evils: not to be ruled by him.[27]

Plato actually seems to have believed that one day the world would come to his doorstep and beg him to become their exalted ruler. This fact may be gathered from his own statement, namely, that "the small class of philosophers . . . are providentially compelled, whether they wish it or not, to take care of the City, and . . . a like necessity will face the City to submit to their commands."[28] But more than that: the uncouth many who so far have successfully resisted philosophy and the philosopher, especially Plato and his philosophy, "will change their minds . . . if they are only shown what philosophers really are."[29] The many, Plato insists, need the philosopher (and Plato in particular) far more than they realize. For the philosopher alone possesses the "royal science," and he who possesses this "royal science"—and, judging from his own writings, Plato most certainly possesses it or, better, is actually its sole possessor—"whether he rules or does not

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[26] Cf., Plato, *Republic* 499B: ". . . neither cities nor States nor individuals will ever attain to perfection until . . . philosophers . . . are providentially compelled, whether they wish it or not, to take command of the City. . . ." This passage, it goes without saying, makes it amply clear that Plato believes that to be the philosopher king is a "duty" or, better, an inexorable destiny which apparently has singled him out for this role.

[27] Plato, *Republic* 520B ff. In the *Seventh Epistle* (327C ff.), Plato reports that after the death of Dionysius the Elder, Dion saw an opportunity of putting into effect Plato's political and social ideals, and thus bring happiness and bliss to the people of Syracuse "beyond all calculation." But in order to achieve this state of perfect bliss, Dion had to bring Plato to Syracuse as soon as possible so that the latter might lend a hand in bringing about the desired result. Plato undertook the journey that he personally might effect this reform (328B). As a matter of fact, he felt that "duty was calling him." (328CD). See also Plato (?), *Third Epistle* 316C; Plato (?), *Second Epistle* 311E; Plutarch, *Dion* 10 ff.; Cornelius Nepos, *Dion* 3.

[28] Plato, *Republic* 499C. See also note 26, *supra*.

[29] Plato, *Republic* 500A.

rule, must be proclaimed royal [and, hence, become ruler]."[30] This statement in itself should make it clear that Plato considered himself the foremost, if not the only true, philosopher king.

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[30] Plato, Statesman 292E ff.

[31] According to Diogenes Laertius 3.23 (see also Aelian, *Var. Hist.* 2.42, and Plato (?), *Eleventh Epistle*), the Arcadians and Thebans invited Plato to become the *nomothetes* ("lawgiver") of the newly founded city of Megalopolis. The people of Cyrene extended to him a similar invitation. Plutarch, *Ad principem ineruditum* 779D; see also Aelian, *Var. Hist.* 12.30. Plato, however, rejected both invitations. Presumably he was not given as "free a hand" in arranging the legal and political affairs of these cities as he expected or perhaps demanded.

The Secretary's Notes

Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting

FINAL ARRANGEMENTS have been completed for the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association on April 4 and 5, 1961, at the Statler Hotel in Buffalo, New York. Since 1961 is not only the centenary anniversary of the birth of the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, in whose honor a panel section will be devoted, but also of Msgr. Edward Pace, one of the founders of our Association, a special tribute will be paid the late Msgr. Pace at the banquet meeting. The NCWC News Service has already carried a syndicated article about Msgr. Pace and his intentions and aims in the foundation of the ACPA.

Thirteenth International Congress of Philosophy

The Thirteenth International Congress of Philosophy will be held in 1963 in Mexico City, Mexico. Dr. Vernon J. Bourke, of St. Louis University, continues his excellent liaison work with the International Congress. Through his thoughtfulness, all individual members of the American Catholic Philosophical Association will hear directly from the Organization Committee of the International Congress. If anyone wishes any further communication with the Congress, the secretary is Dr. José Luis Curiel. His address is as follows: Dr. José Luis Curiel y B., Secretario, XIII Congreso Internacional de Filosofia, Torre de Humanidades, 1er. Piso., Ciudad Universitaria, Mexico 20, D. F., Mexico.

Second International Congress of Medieval Philosophy

The International Society for the Study of Medieval Philosophy will hold its Second International Congress of Medieval Philosophy at Cologne, from August 31st to September 6, 1961, at the invitation of the Thomas Institut of the University of Cologne. The Institut has assumed responsibility for the carrying through of the Congress.

Etienne Gilson has agreed to accept the honorary presidency of the Congress. The Organizing Committee has chosen the following general theme for the work of the Congress: "The Origin and Importance of Metaphysics in the Middle-Ages." Two kinds of sessions are planned: 1. Plenary sessions, to be held in the mornings;

for these sessions the speakers are invited by the Organizing Committee; and 2. Group sessions, to be held in the afternoons, at which papers by Congress members will be presented. The groups will be determined as soon as it becomes clear what the interests of the participants are.

A general meeting of the members of the International Society for the Study of Medieval Philosophy will be held in the course of the Congress. The main items on the agenda are: The settling of the definite form of the statutes; new elections to the executive board; adoption of the reports of secretariat and commissions; discussion of possible tasks for the future work of the various organs of the Association. The final agenda will be published in one of the forthcoming circular letters from the Association.

The Congress will be composed of (1) *active members,* who will participate in the whole program of the Congress and receive a copy of the Acts, and (2) *associates,* who may attend all sessions of the Congress, but will not receive a copy of the Acts nor be entitled to read a paper of their own. Congress fees for active members are $10.00. Members of the Association who have paid their membership dues for 1961 pay $8.00 instead. Associates pay $5.00. Fees may be paid in any currency.

Papers may be read in the following languages: Latin, German, English, French, Italian, Spanish. They should not exceed eight typewritten pages (double spaced) in length and should reach the Congress Secretariat before March 1st, 1961. The address of the Secretariat is: Thomas-Institut an der Universität Koln, Koln-Lindenthal, Universitätsstrasse 22. The Executive Committee retains the right to turn down such papers as do not conform to the general theme of the Congress. The Secretariat would appreciate early notice of the names of such as intend to participate in the Congress and of the topics of projected papers. Registration forms should be returned to the Thomas-Institut before November 1st, 1960. For the Organizing Committee please contact Msgr. Augustin Mansion, Professor at the University of Louvain, President of the International Society for the Study of Medieval Philosophy.

Official Business

By the time of this printing, the members should have received the *Proceedings* of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Meeting.

Furthermore, either by this time or shortly thereafter, the members

should receive a questionnaire concerning the manner of organization and the time, place, and format of our annual meetings. Each member is urged to fill out the questionnaire according to the directions therein and to return it to the chairman of the questionnaire committee. This is especially important so that the members of the executive council can proceed to their arrangements with a good general knowledge of the wishes and intentions of the members.

Regional Meetings

The San Francisco Conference of the American Catholic Philosophical Association has been an especially well organized and busy one. Under the chairmanship (1958-1959) of the Rev. Dr. Austin J. Fagothey, S. J., of Santa Clara University, the program consisted of alternate dinner meetings at restaurants in San Francisco featuring guest speakers and meetings in the library of Sacred Heart High School featuring papers by the conference members. During the academic year of 1958-1959, the speakers and subject were: Dr. John Wellmuth, "Philip Frank's Conception of the Relationship between Philosophy and Science"; Dr. James Albertson, S. J., "Philosophy and Physics"; Dr. Edward W. Strong of the University of California, "How God is Known to Us, A Dialogue"; the Rev. Austin Fagothey, S. J., "Being and Value in Contemporary American Axiology"; and Dr. Frederick Wilhelmsen, "Contemporary Spanish Philosophy." Under the chairmanship (1959-1960) of Dr. W. Mark Sullivan, College of Notre Dame, Belmont, California, the same arrangements were continued. The speakers and topics were: Dr. Celestine J. Sullivan, "Some Informal Remarks on Hume's Arguments"; Dr. William D. Nietmann of the College of the Pacific, "Impact and Value"; Mr. Daniel Araoz, S. J., "Insistential Philosophy, A Catholic Answer to Existentialism"; Rev. Dr. Karel J. de Bouvère, S. C. J., of Amsterdam, Netherlands, "Science and Philosophy"; and Dr. Arturo Fallico, San Jose State College, "Some Problems in Heidigger's Existentialist Ontology."

The conference, listing seventy-one members, is considering sponsoring a general conference to be held within the next two years on the subject: "Evaluating the Required Philosophy Curriculum." It is hoped that such a meeting would include representatives from colleges located in Southern California and in the Northwest as well as from institutions in the San Francisco area. The chairman continues to be Dr. W. Mark Sullivan, College of Notre Dame, Belmont, California, and the secretary-treasurer is Frank Clark of the University of San Francisco.

The ACPA had, at one time, a flourishing regional conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. Its membership was drawn from Tulane University, New Orleans; Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; Loyola University; Notre Dame Seminary; Xavier University; and various other Catholic institutions in the New Orleans area. Even though it has become inactive, it still has an adequate amount of capital ($300.00) in one of the local banks. There is a certain amount of interest in starting it up again. For those in the area who are concerned about this chapter, please write: the Rev. Dr. Thomas Dubay, S. M., or the Rev. Thomas Gilbride, S. M., Notre Dame Seminary, 2901 S. Carrollton Avenue, New Orleans 18, Louisiana; or else please write to the national secretary, Catholic University, Washington 17, D. C.

Fr. John Yardan, C. S. C., of King's College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, is interested in starting a regional conference in the Wilkes-Barre area. If anyone in this area is so concerned, please write to Fr. Yardan at the King's College address.

Government Sponsored Research in Philosophy

For some time the United States Air Force Office of Scientific Research has been doing extensive work in the theory and practice of analog and digital electronic computors. In a communication to this office, Capt. Joseph F. Martino, USAF, of the Air Research and Development Command, announced that this research has led the investigators into the field of epistemology, most particulary, in problems of the learning process, concept formation, pattern thinking, and similar problems in epistemology and logic. Capt. Martino announces that if any organized philosophical group is interested in subsidized research in this field they are invited to submit bids to the Air Research and Development Command. It is necessary that a project be tentatively formulated in terms of specific areas of investigation, equipment desired, and finances considered necessary even in the initial bid. For further information please write to: Capt. Joseph F. Martino, USAF, Mathematical Sciences, Headquarters, Air Force Office of Scientific Research, Air Research and Development Command, United States Air Force, Washington 25, D. C.

Institute for Philosophical Research

The Institute for Philosophical Research, 1998 Pacific Avenue, San Francisco, California, announced the beginning of a three year term

of study made possible by new grants it has received. The Old Dominion Foundation, which has been one of the principal sponsors of the Institute, is continuing its support at the rate of $50,000 annually for the next three years. The Houghton Foundation of New York has made a parallel grant of $25,000 a year. These grants, plus $40,000 a year from other sources, provide an annual budget of about $115,000. The Institute was founded in 1952 by Mortimer J. Adler to analyze the fundamental ideas and issues of Western thought. Mr. Robert G. Hazo has been appointed Associate Director of the Institute, effective September 1, 1960. The Institute has added to its staff of consultants Dr. George P. Grant, until recently head of the Department of Philosophy in Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Dr. Grant is the author of *Philosophy in the Mass Age*. Other consultants include Jacques Maritain of Princeton, Richard McKeon of Chicago, and Paul Weiss of Yale.

Miscellaneous

Dr. Richard P. DeGeorge, acting chairman of the department of philosophy, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, has submitted the following announcement. Prof. I. M. Bochenski of the University of Freiburg, Switzerland, will be a visiting Rose Morgan professor at the University of Kansas during the fall semester, 1960. He will teach one course in the history of logic, and another in contemporary philosophy.

The Rev. Carl W. Grindel, C. M., chairman of the department of philosophy at St. John's University, N. Y., has announced that the Rev. Dr. L. M. Régis, professor of philosophy at the University of Montreal, will be a guest professor at St. John's during the second semester of the academic year, 1960-1961.

Fordham University's Department of Philosophy announces the publication of a new philosophical journal, *International Philosophical Quarterly*, to begin in January, 1961. It will be co-edited by the Jesuit Philosophical Faculty of Berchmans Philosophicum, in Heverlee-Louvain, Belgium, who will ensure continental European collaboration in each issue. All articles will appear in English, in view of its dominant role as the international medium of communication, especially in the Orient.

The aim of the review is to provide a truly international forum for the vigorous contemporary expression—creative, critical, and historical—of the great tradition of theistic, spiritualist, and personalist philosophy in which lies the true inner strength and strongest bond of unity

between East and West, but without further restriction of school within this broad stream of thought. Through this means the editors hope to promote greater mutual understanding and more fruitful dialogue between Catholic and non-Catholic, American and European, Western and Eastern philosophers, who now too often work in isolation from each other, to their mutual detriment. Widespread low-cost distribution in the Orient, with the help of benefactors and sustaining members, will help to make the voice of the rich spiritual tradition of Western philosophy heard more clearly and eloquently among the newly self-conscious peoples of the non-Western world, where it is at present so imperfectly known.

Subscriptions: 4 issues (640 pages)—$6.50 a year ($3.00 in the Orient). *Sustaining Members*: $25.00 a year (this will subsidize 5 additional low-cost Asian subscriptions). Write *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Fordham University, New York 58, New York.

Leo A. Foley, S. M.
National Secretary

The Catholic University of America,
University, D. C.

Book Reviews

The Inquiring Mind. **By George Boas. LaSalle, Ill.: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1959. Pp. xi + 428, with index. $4.50.**

Subtitled, "An Introduction to Epistemology," these Paul Carus lectures of 1956, in addition to serving as an introduction to the problem of knowledge, cover much of the ground that is usually discussed by undergraduate texts in metaphysics. In addition to chapters on the problem of perception, the nature of experience, and the notion of fact, there are chapters on efficient and final causality, the hierarchy of being, the problem of the one and the many, and the reality of substance and accident. The bulk of the book dwells on these latter topics, yet the author is not so much concerned with the solution to these problems as he is in setting limits to the inquiring mind, showing that the above-named metaphysical notions have no foundation in experience, and hence should have never arisen in the first place.

For Boas, the inquiring mind is a problem-solving mind. Like Dewey, to whom he acknowledges much indebtedness, Boas regards all knowledge as the answer to a problem. A problem arises when one becomes aware of a deviation from a rule. But the existence of a deviation from the norm will not always be noticed. The compulsion to see the world as regular may drown out irregularities. Experience, language, habit, and social factors have much to do with what we look for and consequently with what we see.

The result of this approach is a skepticism in which all propositions are tentative or hypothetical. Experience can never verify a belief; it can only cause the repudiation of beliefs. No amount of verification can produce certitude, for the testing of a proposition is endless. Nature exercises merely a negative role in the acquisition of knowledge, influencing our judgments about it only when our judgments are not corroborated by experience.

In such a context, truth can never be achieved. Boas proposes that the term "truth" be reserved for internal consistency. Truth is then said only of systems, not of isolated propositions. The proposition unless assimilated into a previously existing system is meaningless. The verification of propositions consists in showing either their consistency or inconsistency with beliefs already held.

In discussing the nature of causality, Boas reserves the word "causality" to what Aristotle called efficient causality, and "purpose" to describe final causality. The author attacks what he regards as the unfounded attributing to processes in nature what is true only of man. The fact that man makes things for purposes, Boas writes, does not warrant our search for agents and purposes in nature. Theological explanation extended beyond human behavior can only be metaphorical. Where there is no choice, there can be no purpose. The notion of (efficient) cause is likewise anthropomorphic. Entailments belong to sentences, not to events, and to interrelations between judgments and propositions, not to interrelations between things. What we mean by cause is that part of the flux of events which normally precedes in time the event in question. That which normally follows it, we regard as its purpose. Since the process may be interrupted at any point, so-called purposes are more difficult to ascertain than causes.

To Boas, it is evident that we cannot discover the cause of an isolated event. The establishment or discovery of causes requires repetition. Hence to raise the question of a first cause of the universe is to raise a meaningless question. Such an event is by definition unique. The author writes: "Insofar as a particular event is unique, it is either inexplicable or self-caused or an accident, all of which are synonyms, except for their emotional charge."

Boas also criticizes what he regards as unfounded distinctions between appearance and reality, nature and activity, and substance and accident. Alice would be truly mystified in Boas' wonderland where it is possible to have "thinking without a thinker, and action without an agent." By definition, writes Boas, a thing is what it does; natures are whatever they appear to be.

The Inquiring Mind is not an important work. It is a restatement of a familiar position. Boas is frequently charming, and his long years as teacher and historian have enabled him to season his lectures with myriad examples and interesting digressions, but one could expect more of this renowned author.

One of the basic flaws in Boas' theory of knowledge seems to be his misunderstanding of the role of judgment. Contrary to what Boas maintains, it could be argued that once judgments are made, their confirmation is not in terms of their consistency with previous experience, but in terms of the experience itself, usually by a duplication of that experience. Boas can be granted the fact that previous experience

colors our judgments. But the truth or falsity of the judgment "this apple is red" does not depend on our previous experience, even though the notions of red and apple do depend on antecedent experience. Our previous experience may lead us to believe that some apples are red, but it is silent with respect to *this* apple.

In asserting that experience teaches us only that we are wrong, Boas leaves himself open to the charge that he is being arbitrary. Granted that what we know is derived from experience, if we make a mistake in judgment about our experience, then further acquaintance with the object teaches us that we are wrong, but if we make a right judgment, then further experience discloses the validity of our judgment.

Part of Boas' failure to extricate himself from the skepticism into which he reluctantly falls is his conviction that there is only chaos in nature, that order is something the mind arbitrarily introduces. He fails to account for the mind's compulsion to see things as ordered. A reasonable explanation of the mind's tendency to order is that things themselves are ordered, but not in a strict deterministic way so that no deviation is possible. Things are ordered, and because of this the mind, capable of faithfully reporting reality, can regard them as ordered. But the order admits of exceptions, which the mind can also faithfully report. Like Hume, Boas merely pushes the problem from an ontological to a psychological plane when he attributes the ordering solely to the mind. He leaves unanswered the question of why the mind orders.

Further criticism may be directed against Boas because of his failure as an historian. On page 299 he attributes to St. Thomas the doctrine that position in space is the individuating principle for material things, offering this criticism of St. Thomas: "But if one set of coordinates will define positions, then a point at XA and YB will be already individuated before it can individuate anything which happens to be there." It takes but little acquaintance with the *De Ente et Essentia*, to which Boas refers, to see that what St. Thomas means by designated matter is matter under determinate dimensions, matter which can be pointed to with the finger. Boas also erroneously attributes to St. Thomas the doctrine that God pre-individuates the human soul before its union with matter. Aristotle, likewise, is given cavalier treatment. Boas interprets Aristotle's statement, "There is an essence only of those things whose formula is a definition," (*Meta.*, 1030a6) to mean, "The individual as the *infima species* can have no essence." In the passage referred to,

Aristotle is distinguishing between natural beings and artifacts, and after a discussion of substance and essence, he makes the point that, "each primary and self-subsistent thing is one and the same as its essence," (1032a5). Boas also attributes to Aristotle the doctrine that form individuates matter, whereas in the *Metaphysics* Aristotle clearly says that Callias and Socrates are "different in virtue of their matter (for that is different), but the same in form." (1034a6-7).

These and many similar errors weaken the reader's confidence in Boas as a faithful historian and hence as a competent interpreter of the views he chooses to report.

JUDE P. DOUGHERTY

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The Phenomenon of Man. **By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Harper and Bros., 1959. Pp. 318, with index. $5.00.**

This stimulating, challenging book is being acclaimed widely as the greatest publishing event in 1959. Reviewers predict it will remain a classic and be read assiduously for decades to come. The great publicity and fulsome praise it has received are well deserved. It affords the reader a unique opportunity for a great intellectual and emotional experience. All Catholic theologians, philosophers, and scientists owe it to themselves to read this very important and original work.

The book contains a brilliant synoptic vision of total cosmic and human evolution, a vision that is shown to be not merely consistent with Christianity, but completed by what only the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ seems able to supply. A bold but orthodox synthesis of science and theology, of nature and supernature, is suggested implicitly toward the end of the volume. Essentially the book presents a strictly scientific description and explanation of the whole course of terrestrial evolution. Geogenesis, biogenesis, psychogenesis, and noogenesis follow each other in order, antecedent stages always prefiguring the subsequent ones, everything moving in a definitely determined pregressive direction. A recurrent law of complexity / consciousness is discerned as operative throughout, engendering a strong hope for the eventual culmination of the entire process in the form of a supra-personal spiritual "organism," subsisting perpetually through love.

The author is a French Jesuit priest, who lived and died in the

Society, and is buried in a Jesuit cemetery in the United States. This is so far the only one of his works translated into English. A profound spirituality can be discerned as inspiring his scientific thought, a spirituality more manifest in several of Teilhard's other works. His thought and personality were completely Christocentric. His deep spirituality has been attested to by many who knew him personally. They found his conversation always compelling, his human charm irresistible.

Julian Huxley's enthusiastic Introduction to this volume is indicative of the great esteem and universal respect Teilhard's scientific colleagues accorded him. An eminent paleontologist whose scientific work concerned extinct animals and extinct forms of man, he wrote voluminously and received the acknowledgment of scientific societies everywhere.

In a brilliant style all his own, and with the insights of a genius, Teilhard attempts to bridge the unfortunate gap between the Christian and the secular world, using language the modern man of science will understand. It would be hard to find another Catholic thinker who has succeeded so well with such a task. Teilhard was bi-lingual by nature. The scholastic philosopher, by the way, will probably have to remind himself constantly as he reads this book that the author is always writing on what he calls the phenomenological plane. If certain of his statements are interpreted in a metaphysical sense, the scholastic will be inclined to reject them as untenable. Attention should be paid to the author's explanatory footnotes relating to this matter of different levels of discourse. It is apparent from the text, incidentally, that what Teilhard calls the phenomenological plane has nothing at all to do with Husserlian phenomenology or any other philosophical brand of phenomenological analysis.

To attempt to outline the contents of this book is almost to do its author a disservice. The original is incredibly rich and sparkling. It is the unique product of the personal reflections and individual style of a man of genius. The whole adds up to a mystical vision ranging over the entire universe with great intellectual acumen and profound emotional responsiveness.

Teilhard might be interpreted as taking a new look at the analogy of being. To the objective features of this analogy, he adds the concepts of interiorization and personalization of being. Even the primitive atom has powers prefigurative of the psychic. Everything must be viewed and judged in two ways: from within and from without. Everything has an inside as well as an outside. The whole of terrestrial evolution is

directed in accordance with the recurrent law of complexity / consciousness toward the goal of the phenomenon of man. Molecules lead to living matter. Living matter develops and manifests ever more complex powers, especially of personalization. Among mammals, this preoccupation with self-awareness is registered in the development of the brain. This process is given a new level in man. Man not only knows, but knows that he knows. Human reflection epitomizes and crowns the entire direction of the cosmic process.

With man, evolution takes a new turn. Every stage of evolution prior to man fanned out into a multiplicity of beings. The human species has spread out all over the globe, forming something greater than the biosphere; the noosphere is the terrestrial envelope which manifests the acme of interiorization and personalization, man. This species now manifests a global trend towards unity; instead of fanning out, it curves back in on itself. It now seeks a pole of orientation. This cannot be itself. It must be a pole outside of humanity, but capable of absorbing it. Teilhard at first designates this pole vaguely as the Omega Point. Later it is identified with God, the Alpha and Omega. Christ is finally seen as the ideal of human evolution. Love is the force destined to unite all humanity into an "organism" centered on a transcendent Person.

There are a number of reasons why philosophers in particular should be interested in this book. Teilhard's view synthesizes apparently irreconcilable opposites. Distinguishing powers within and powers without, Darwinian chance can be interpreted as what the scientist sees without. Within, there may still be direction. Without, there can be determinism (especially in a statistical sense). Within, there can be liberty. Lamarckianism and Darwinism, mechanism and vitalism, and similar antithetical positions are synthesized in Teilhard's view of the world.

If he tries to enter sympathetically into the point of view of this book, the philosopher cannot fail to appreciate the tremendous significance of the world of process. He will realize that Catholic philosophers have still not come to grips with this matter. The proddings of a genius, the material in this book can inspire the philosopher to reappraise critically his concepts of the analogy of being, causality, and the hierarchical nature of the universe,[1] and to deepen his understanding of the concepts of creation, conservation, concurrence and providence.

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[1] L. Moreau, "Les théories transformistes et la philosophie thomiste," *Revue de Philosophie*, XXXIX (1939) 199-232; 311-34. Cf., p. 334.

The Catholic scientist in particular would be grateful to the Catholic philosopher if he would once and for all make up his mind to tackle the subject of evolution with real earnestness and truly philosophical thoroughness.

An excellent companion book to this volume is Claude Tresmontant's *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: His Thought* (Baltimore, 1959). It contains a critical exposition of Teilhard's thought as a whole, a glossary of technical terms and a bibliography of books and articles by and about Teilhard de Chardin.

BERNARD B. GILLIGAN

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Friendship in Saint Augustine. **By Marie Aquinas McNamara, O. P. Fribourg, Switzerland: The University Press, 1958. Pp. xx + 231, with index. Fr. 16.60.**

It would be possible to know St. Augustine, the father of the Church and doctor of grace, without adverting to the role friendship played in his life. It would not be possible to know Augustine the man, however, without looking into this facet of his many-sided personality. No man is an island; least of all a theologian and philosopher. When one interprets the teaching of a "personal" writer like Augustine, does it not help to know the man in depth, and therefore also his relations with friends and his reactions to them?

Friendship in Saint Augustine, a doctoral dissertation submitted to the faculty of philosophy of the University of Fribourg, proposes to offer a more complete psychological study of both the practical and theoretical aspects of the phenomenon of friendship in Augustine than is available in the standard biographies of the saint. It concerns both the friendships in his life and the theory of friendship that can be gathered from scattered quotations in his works. The major portion of the dissertation examines Augustine's relations with his friends. A much briefer portion is allotted a critical study of "friendship" according to St. Augustine.

The structure of this book is as follows: an introduction considers various features of Augustine's unusual genius for friendship as well as the physical and cultural heritage which contributed to it. The first three chapters attempt to show that his attitude toward friendship

underwent an evolution comprising four stages: (1) a confusion of friendship with simple camaraderie; (2) an adherence to the classical ideal of friendship; (3) the transformation of the classical ideal into a Christian conception of friendship; (4) the extension of Christian friendship in charity. Viewing the entire course of human friendship in his life, the author points out a psychological constant in his character, namely, the sympathy and love which enabled him to touch the inmost life of others. Unlike Cicero, Augustine did not leave a special treatise on friendship. But from numerous passages taken from his writings a theory "according to the mind" of the Saint can be worked out. The author presents this in the fourth and final chapter of her dissertation with the remark that the pressure of time permits only a summary treatment and a promise of developing more fully Augustine's theory later in a series of articles.

As remarked above, the major portion of this work is expository or descriptive of Augustine's relations with his friends. The present writer found particularly interesting the analysis of several friendships among the nearly forty instanced in this book. Sr. Marie Aquinas is at her best in delineating the delicate features of the relationship between Augustine and Monica, his mother; only at the very end of her life were the conditions of true Christian friendship realized between them. Augustine's viewpoint on friendship at the time were now maturely Christian: love, confidence, frankness, prayer were qualities of a friendship that had to be centered on God. In the author's researches into his relations with such loyal friends as Nebridius and Alypius one perceives better both the constant element and the evolution in Augustine's friendship with others. Notable were the qualities of patience and loyalty the Bishop displayed toward friends throughout his long episcopate. Like that of love the course of friendship does not always run smoothly; and this is no better seen than in the relations of St. Augustine with St. Jerome. In her rather extensive coverage of this relationship the author is of the opinion that only a qualified friendship held between these two, and it had to triumph over misunderstandings and differences of temperament. The true mettle of Augustine's Christian friendship is viewed in his dealings with men whose friendship was lost because they refused to bring it under the aegis of Truth. Like other saints Augustine was not made holy overnight, nor did he mature in Christian friendship in a day's time. The ideal became the reality only after trial and error and the passage of time.

In the final part of her study the author presents Augustine's

conception of Christian friendship by examining his definitions of it in chronological order and then by listing those duties considered essential to it: love, confidence, frankness, prayer. His views on the formation, preservation, dissolution of friendship are next given and, finally, attention is paid his theory of friendship in its widest sense, the Mystical Body of Christ.

Sr. Marie Aquinas says that St. Augustine's "most original contribution to the idea of friendship is found in a single definition completely independent of Cicero.": "There is no true friendship unless You weld it between souls that cleave together through that charity which is shed in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us."

This is an interesting dissertation, well-written, extensively documented with quotations from Augustine both in Latin and in translation. In it the Saint is given free rein to speak for himself with a minimum of interruption by the author. Sr. Marie Aquinas shows keen perception and brings sympathy and understanding to Augustine's many friendships and his reflections on them.

FRANK DE LA VEGA, O. R. S. A.

St. Augustine's Monastery,
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Aristotle. **By John Herman Randall, Jr. New York: Columbia University Press, 1960. Pp. xv + 309, with index. $5.00.**

Long overdue, perhaps despaired of by those interested, has been a wide-awake presentation of Aristotle in contemporary American idiom. It was a task for an enterprising and not too young a scholar who had kept a sensitive finger on the pulse of American thought over the last three or four decades, and who at the same time had an ear keenly attuned to the living chords in Aristotelian wisdom. A courtship between two so widely divergent traditions faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Yet, without fanfare, the match had been fostered at Columbia from 1902 on, mainly through the far-reaching vision of Woodbridge; and the current leap year has seen it happily given the public sanction of print in a dazzling new *Aristotle.*

Randall approaches the Stagirite, with enthusiasm, from the problems of Peirce, Alexander, Whitehead, Dewey, and the contemporary linguistic analysts. Against this wide and highly relevant background,

he finds Plato and Aristotle "never so alive as today" (p. viii). Aristotle, "a Greek to the last fiber of his being," had "got all that Plato had to offer" and more, managing "in the end to give a complete and final expression of Greece and the Greek mind" (p. 1-2). The work of the Stagirite glows radiant as "not 'cold thought,' but the passionate search for passionless truth" (p. 1). The conclusion is that although Aristotle did not say everything, "without what he first said all words would be meaningless, and when it is forgotten they usually are" (p. 300).

So expressing himself, Randall leaves not the least doubt about his wholehearted absorption in and sympathetic understanding of his subject. Offering not a philologist's but rather "a philosopher's delineation of Aristotle" (p. vii), he grapples straightforwardly with the most difficult problem of approach, the problem of presenting to us "confirmed Baconians" the aim of Aristotle to *understand* things as they are, not to control them nor "to make them different from what they are" (p. 2). He is well aware that he faces a contemporary milieu that "has not been able to find any intelligible place for mind, for science itself, in the world that science describes" (p. 6). Handing on with some reservations Jaeger's general picture of Aristotle's life and work (pp. 10-29), he stresses as "philosophically convincing" (p. 12) Aristotle's well-known medical lineage. Added to this is the obvious democratic fact that biological investigations make up about one third of the extant Aristotelian treatises (which "seem to be really rather full notes of lectures"—p. 25). They form by far the largest group in comparison with any other subject (p. 220). These indications of biological motivation, coupled with easily recognized functional methods in general, show that Aristotle "can be viewed as a behaviorist, an operationalist, and a contextualist, with a thoroughgoing philosophy of process" (p. 31; cf. p. 169). In fact, the conclusion of *De Anima* III "states a thoroughgoing instrumentalism in terms of the ends and procedures of practical *nous*" (p. 73).

Logic, though, is an exception. Randall is too alert to Aristotle's continued contrast of *logikos* and *physikos* to see the logic ever fitting into a "functionalist" instead of a "formalist" (p. 96) pattern: "... he never treats *logos* as a 'part' of the *psychē*, as one of the functions making up 'life.' Such a treatment is not in the *De Anima* at all, but it ought to be." The author's professional honesty, however, is proof against the temptation to write out that treatment on papyrus and plant

it in the sands of Egypt for a future archaeologist to discover (p. 102). The logic, notwithstanding, is given a remarkably clear and convincing presentation (pp. 32-58). Dialectic is exceptionally well treated. The rout simile of the *Posterior Analytics* is brilliantly explained, with all "abstraction" tellingly eliminated from the Aristotelian process of universalization (pp. 42-43). Aristotle, in whose procedure "there is never any conflict between theory and facts" (p. 28), is shown to have been empirical to a fault (pp. 56-58).

The *De Anima* and related texts are examined in detail to establish the functional character of the Stagirite's thought (pp. 59-106). In the *Metaphysics*, "fundamental changes" (p. 107) of position are emphasized. The separate intelligences of Book Lambda, as well as the "active intellect" of *De Anima*, are found to be Platonic myths (pp. 105; 141); and, "to be consistent," Aristotle must find *nous* actualized "in the minds of men" (p. 144). For "Aristotle's Unmoved Mover is an ideal. It is . . . the Platonic 'Idea of the Good'" (p. 139). Accordingly, "God is both formal and final cause," the generalization of "a factor found in every process" (p. 143). No distinction is made (pp. 135-137) between the efficient unmoved movers of the *Physics* and the final unmoved movers of the *Metaphysics*, and Buhle's eighteenth-century phantasy that the title "Metaphysics" is editorial in origin is still treasured (pp. 26-27; 108) with accumulated interest. The *De Caelo* is regarded as "Aristotle's *Ph. D.* thesis," because of the "Platonic" character of its lore (p. 148). The *Physics* is treated as "really a philosophical introduction to the concepts of natural science" (p. 169). Nature, motion, genesis, practical science and productive science are explained with rare insight and admirable clarity (pp. 163-293), though zeal to exclude beginning in time and creation occasions the misleading formulation "Motion has no efficient cause" (p. 133). Aristotelian ethics is shown to be applicable to "*any* cultural heritage" (p. 248), and the difference between acting "on principle" and Aristotelian moral conduct is deftly probed (p. 269).

Although Randall envisages a general progress from Platonic formalism to "Aristotelian" functionalism, his professional honesty acknowledges that most of the Stagirite's treatises end "on the Platonic note" (p. 271; cf. p. 99). But the prudent reserve noted (p. 258n) in regard to "chronological strata" in the *Politics* is not extended to the *Metaphysics*—a mightily explicit papyrus would have to be planted in Egyptian sands to validate, in face of extant evidence, the assertion that Aristotle "came in his maturity to maintain that 'pure forms'

could not exist" (p. 97)! Nor does the admission of "billions of unmoved movers" justify the claim that "every individual process has its own unique unmoved mover" (p. 71; cf. pp. 126-127), for instance, the downward movement of a heavy body. No, the functionalist approach just isn't comprehensive enough to grasp the pure actuality of the *Metaphysics*, the externally caused motion of the *Physics*, or the moral habituation of the *Ethics*, any more than it will be able to touch the logic. The actuality of Aristotelian form is simply too rich and too broad to be shrunk into the mold of a much narrower biological category.—Yet the drawback of these crippling limitations pales into insignificance alongside the fact that the Stagirite is really being approached, and with up-to-date, red-blooded verve. Just as Aristotle in English translation can be grasped by a person who has read the Greek (pp. x; 298), so even the best book on Aristotle becomes intelligible when one has mastered the Aristotelian text. The important thing is to attract students to that text. From this really pertinent viewpoint, Randall has done a magnificent job.

The book is studded throughout with shrewd observations, urbane humor, and penetrating comments. It is interesting and stimulating from the first line to the last. On every page there are statements to wrestle with, often to quarrel with, but very seldom (as books on Aristotle go) to reject outright. Though its stand that the Stagirite's functional approach to knowledge "is the only sensible and intelligible, the only fruitful attitude" (p. 105) is patently exaggerated, and though its way of relating Aristotelian natural philosophy to modern science is oversimplified, the book should do yeoman's service in promoting Aristotle's rightful role in American culture as *il maestro di color che sanno*.

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The Triumph of Subjectivity. **An Introduction to Transcendental Phenomenology. By Quentin Lauer, S. J. New York: Fordham University Press, 1958. Pp. ix + 185. $4.00.**

If Edmund Husserl himself were to make a choice of a title for an exposition of his phenomenology, he might prefer, for the sake of emphasis, *The Triumph of Objectivity*. He would not, however, be

likely to raise any objections to the title above, since it is precisely in transcendental subjectivity that he would constitute the objectivity which is for him the supreme desideratum and true mark of philosophical knowledge. In this penetrating study of phenomenology at its source, Fr. Lauer shows Husserl's directing idea of philosophy as strict science, characterized by necessity and objectivity, to be the source of its strength and at the same time of its weakness. On the one hand it issued in a heroic defense of the validity of knowledge against current skepticism and subjectivism in its various forms, especially psychologism; on the other, it ended in the attempt at a complete rationalization of experience that tended to impoverish philosophy and being itself.

The objectivity in question is rooted in the doctrine of the intentionality of consciousness, the central theme of Husserl's phenomenology. Fr. Lauer traces the notion of the intentional object, which Husserl received from scholastic philosophy by way of his teacher Brentano, from its original scholastic significance of *being-as-known* which is the counterpart of *being in reality*; through Husserl's *being-as-known*, the counterpart of which is "bracketed" existentially; and ultimately to his absolute being of consciousness, "constituted" by and in consciousness.

Paul Ricoeur, remarking on the ambivalence of Husserl's thought, has noted that it appears as a combat between two tendencies, the one toward respecting the "altereity" of that which "appears" to consciousness, and the other toward the reduction of the "altereity" to the monadic life of the ego. Fr. Lauer's interpretation emphasizes the latter tendency, since he gives greatest prominence to the *Formale und transzendentale Logik* and the *Cartesianische Meditationen* as definitive revelations of Husserl's theory. Careful analysis of the *epochē*, of the reductions that culminate in the "constitution" of the world and of the transcendental ego itself, and of the phenomenological criterion of truth lead Fr. Lauer to the conclusion that Husserl enclosed himself in a reflexive circle. The crux of the problem is to be found in the necessary laws of "constitution." Concerning the ultimate nature of the necessity which is the mainstay of Husserlian objectivity and certitude, Fr. Lauer raises the question (and inclines toward an affirmative answer) whether it is only a logical necessity. The question is a difficult one. Husserl had, of course, rejected a purely psychological necessity and aimed at a necessity independent also of the factual—and contingent—world. The ultimate ground of the material and formal

a priori which he attempted to establish appears to be singularly inaccessible to phenomenological method, and thus one is left without an unequivocal answer from Husserl himself.

Although Fr. Lauer gives a genetic perspective of Husserl's thought, the analysis of the earlier writings is rather sketchy. He views the total work as being all of a piece, the works which represent the peak of Husserl's transcendental idealism being a rectilinear development of the earlier ones, such as the *Logische Untersuchungen*. It is unfortunate that only two pages are devoted to Husserl's last work, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, even though the author gives his reason for making short shrift of it.

Historically, as Fr. Lauer indicates, the ultimate direction of Husserlian phenomenology was not evident to Husserl's early associates and pupils who flocked to Göttingen after reading the *Logische Untersuchungen* precisely because of its apparent radical aversion from subjectivism and idealism. As Edith Stein wrote, "Knowing was once more a process of reception whose laws were received from things and not—as in critical idealism—the imposition of laws upon things." Thus *Ideen I* came as a distinct shock to them. As Fr. Lauer notes, even Husserl's closest disciples have not been in full agreement with him on the utter radicality of the reductions, the ideality of the objectivities with which they are concerned, and the universality of intentional constitution. For them, as for later phenomenological existentialists, Husserl's insistence on the originary function of sensation and perception in knowledge and his unshakable "belief" in the existence of the world have meaning only in the context of an ultimate reference to the real, only if the *epochē* and the reductions are regarded as provisory techniques and not definitive states of mind. Thus Maurice Merleau-Ponty, in the *avant-propos* of his *Phénoménologie de la perception* writes (notwithstanding Husserl's endorsement of Eugen Fink's interpretation of his theory) that the greatest lesson of the reduction is the impossibility of a complete reduction, and that is why Husserl questioned himself again and again on the possibility of the reduction.

The varying interpretations are significant in revealing the nuances, the depth and subtlety of Husserl's thought and the possibility of exploiting it in the cause of truth, even if, like his pupils, one is not willing to go the whole way with him. Fr. Lauer is not, of course, primarily concerned with these diverse interpretations, except in the final chapter on the future of phenomenology. His central purpose is, rather, to present Husserl's original theory in as clear and true a light

as possible. He has concluded to his own interpretation from the vantage point of wide reading and careful study of the corpus of Husserl's works, both published and unpublished.

Among the positive values which his book points up is Husserl's recognition of essence as characteristic of mental conception and of its consequent importance to philosophy. Although Fr. Lauer notes the agreement of Husserl's theory and scholastic philosophy in considering essence as that to which the intellect is primarily oriented, he stresses their divergence. Husserl seeks the essences of conscious experiences; scholastic philosophy, the essences of real beings. On the basis of the ideal character of Husserl's pure *eidos*, Fr. Lauer would locate Husserlian essences in the broad stream of Platonic, not of Aristotelian, thought. It is true that this appears the logical conclusion to Husserl's making essences not only independent of the minds that think them but also independent of the existential world of fact. "There is thus," writes Fr. Lauer, "no question of 'abstracting' essence from empirical reality" (p. 21). Yet the paradox remains that the process by which the essence is brought to givenness in the human mind, according to Husserl, has its invariable starting point in the individual, or singular, and no matter of what kind the original intuition which is the starting point may be, it includes or has an ultimate reference to the data of sense, whether the object be imagined, recalled, or perceived.

Even in a work of this scope, one might wish for a more systematic and complete treatment of Husserl's concept of essence and particularly of his intuition of essence. Fr. Lauer describes the method of free variations given in *Ideen I*, but does not discuss the "ideating" or "generalizing abstraction" of the second *Logical Investigation* (also termed "general intuition" in the sixth). Husserl himself considered this thinking which intellectualizes sensible intuitions and brings the essence to givenness akin to the traditional doctrine of abstraction.

But it is ungracious to ask for more than a work essays, particularly when that work offers so much within the brief compass of less than two hundred pages. Its brevity, however, does prevent at times the clear justification of the critique. The reader who is acquainted with Fr. Lauer's French work, *La phénoménologie de Husserl* (also his French translation and commentary, *Philosophie comme science rigoreuse*) will find the present volume an anti-climax; the former is much more complete than the English work and its method of critique from within, on Husserl's own principles, is more congenial than the method of critique from without.

As Aron Gurwitsch has written in the preface, Fr. Lauer has rendered a valuable service to phenomenology and to American philosophy by this treatment of Husserl's philosophy, which is so little known to American readers in its original form. In the midst of the diverse directions that phenomenology has taken in contemporary philosophy (it reminds one of the man who mounted his horse and rode off in all directions), it is well to return to the beginning and to study it at its source in the thought of the master himself. Fr. Lauer's introduction should attract others to explore the sources as he has done.

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Edmund Burke and the Natural Law. **By Peter J. Stanlis. And with a Forward written by Russell Kirk. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1958. Pp. xiii + 311, with index. $5.75.**

Edmund Burke is a Demosthenes of modern times and beyond that a philosopher-statesman, comparable in his philosophic understanding to the late Don Luigi Sturzo. In jurisprudence and in the study of natural law, as Stanlis shows, he was one of the most learned men in his century. But Burke made his statements on the run, as it were, in the form of speeches and letters and books of public persuasion. And consequently, rhetorician that he was, he did not draw his insights and his arguments into any systematic statement or doctrine. Stanlis, who is a Thomist and understands natural law theory, has undertaken to discern the mind of Burke as revealed in the Complete Writings. The present volume is a valuable interpretation, a work that could not have been composed without a great amount of scholarship; and in this regard, hundreds of references and notes at the back of the book give unobtrusive evidence of the scholarly competence of the author.

Stanlis has a conclusion: that although Burke has been confounded with the utilitarians in his moral theory, he was, on the contrary, "essentially a Thomist in his political philosophy" (p. 249). And indeed much of the book consists in analyzing the scholastic insights of Burke against a utilitarian and Lockean background. Burke's

thought on the natural law most often appeared in connection with the French Revolution, and so another thread of interest runs through Stanlis' book: the wholeness and reasonableness of the natural law of civil society, expounded against the background of the new Revolutionary "natural rights" of 1789.

In an historical chapter Stanlis shows the way in which natural law theory developed in the writings of the ancient Roman jurisconsults, medieval canonists, doctors of the Church and modern legal thinkers such as Vitoria, Suarez, Grotius, Pufendorf and Blackstone. Edmund Burke's notion of the natural law is based on his learning in this tradition (indeed he wrote an article on Blackstone's *Commentaries* when it first appeared); and he both apprehended the absolute dependence of the natural law on the Divine Providence and Law of God and expounded the complexity of the political prudence whereby the natural law might be saved from division and destruction in the constitutional changes of states.

Edmund Burke and the Natural Law has a special interest for Thomist philosophers because it gives the rare opportunity to see how a leading statesman, who was also a scholar in the natural law, combined philosophical know-how with statesmanship; for in fact Burke was inclined both by personal disposition and by the issues of his time to introduce his philosophical insights into his speeches and his writings. Parliamentary statecraft was the vantagepoint which enabled him to make some contribution to natural law philosophy. As Stanlis says (p. 108), "for Burke the Jacobins symbolized the ultimate evil in his lifelong struggle against the [piecemeal] application of abstract speculation to practical politics." Burke wrote in respect to the Jacobin metaphysic "circumstances are infinite, are infinitely combined; he who does not take circumstances into account is not erroneous, but stark mad—*dat operam ut cum ratione insaniat*—he is metaphysically mad" (p. 109). One of Stanlis' accomplishments is to have composed an extensive synthesis, out of his own analyses and out of scattered statements of Burke, about the principle of wholeness of the natural law of civil life. A goodly portion of the book might be described as an exposition of the statement of Burke: "Crude unconnected truths are in the world of practice what falsehoods are in theory" (p. 115). The primary example of the dangers of abstracting a part of the natural law of civil society and amplifying its influence, to the detriment of the remainder of the law, is the emphasis which the French

Revolutionaries gave to the Natural Rights of Man. "Their abstract perfection," said Burke, "is their practical defect" (p. 107). Burke envisaged the natural law of civil society as a guide of social action which, above all, would assert the main goods, goals and perfections of a polity; and only secondarily, and on condition of conforming with itself, would bring about an exquisite refinement of some portion of the social mores of a body-politic.

Moralist writers who are also political leaders of their country are disposed to stress the proper resilience of civil customs and constitutions. And exactly as Sturzo would, one hundred and fifty years later, Burke was inclined to make such statements as: "We must all obey the great law of change" (p. 112). Stanlis devotes many pages to the ways in which Burke sought to recognize and assert the stability and transcendence of the natural law, and yet always strove to define the ways in which the historical changes in human civilization might be brought under the influence of the whole natural law. It is an endeavor valuable for moral theory; and Burke had good occasion to observe that a historical change of peoples tends to take place fragmentarily so that one teaching of the natural law is liable to be turned against the main content.

Burke gave an extraordinary emphasis to the importance of "civil manners" and to the role of the Church in developing the manners of peoples; and Stanlis treats this question and several other important subjects, too. The book is well written and contains many sections worthy of careful study.

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Problems in Aesthetics. **By Morris Weitz. New York: Macmillan, 1959. Pp. ix + 697, with index. $6.90.**

"Aesthetics," says Paul Valéry, "is an irresistible temptation." It is irresistible because to most of us an experience of beauty is incomplete until it is verbally shared. From Plato to Weitz this flow of verbalization moves uninterruptedly through the centuries. *Problems in Aesthetics* brings this fact vividly to our attention. It is an anthology; consequently, any unity which we find in it is artificial and

extrinsic. The book has six parts and develops the aesthetic theme logically and pedagogically as the numerous excerpts move from general problems to more specific ones. These six divisions in order of treatment are: What is Art?—Some Basic Concepts and Problems—The Arts—Tragedy and Problem of Genres—The Problem of Response to Art—Criticism.

The first section attempts to circumscribe the exact nature of art. This effort seems fruitless as we quickly realize that in this area there is no agreement whatever among the chosen authors. Successively, we learn that art is a degradation of nature (Plato), an imitation of nature (Aristotle), a form of beauty (Plotinus), a gratification of the imagination (Joshua Reynolds), the discovery of the emotional elements inherent in natural form (Roger Fry), of satisfaction of desire through a harmonious and socially significant object (DeWitt H. Parker), a virtue of the practical intellect (Jacques Maritain), an intuition (Benedetto Croce), an insight into the formal structure of reality (Ernst Cassirer). While still reeling from the impact of these successive analyses, we suddenly read in the first selection of the second part that the definition of art is a pseudo problem. In his one personal essay, Morris Weitz maintains that the question which we should ask is not "What is art?" but "What are the uses of art?" He evidently shares the opinion of Thomas Munro who claims that among scholars in the field, aesthetics is no longer a branch of speculative philosophy, devoted to the vain attempt to set up universal laws of beauty and good taste, but first of all a descriptive inquiry which seeks to find out and state the facts about works of art as a kind of observable phenomenon. In all fairness to the author, we must say that he allows his nominalistic and pragmatic views to be expertly criticized by Eric Kahler who in the following article shows the value of theory in art. These essays are the only two explicitly written for this book. The other problems treated within this section are those of form and content, expression, language and meaning, medium, style, and intention.

In the third part the editor groups a series of selections which deal with the nature of the seven fine arts and with the specific problems proper to each of them. Finally, the last three sections deal respectively with the notion of tragedy, the response provoked by the contemplation of art, and the exercise of criticism in art.

With this collection Weitz purports to help the beginner in the science of aesthetics. The multiplicity of conflicting viewpoints can

certainly challenge the analytical powers of the uninitiated, but tyros should beware, for here lurks the danger of confusion. The factor of subjectivism inherent in art already makes it partially impervious to intellectual analysis. When to this difficulty an author adds that of simultaneously presenting sundry philosophical interpretations, he assigns to the beginner an impossible task of assimilation. True, this anthology is meant as a textbook, but even then, the burden of explanation placed on the teacher is excessive.

Within each section Weitz has cleverly arranged the sequence of excerpts, so that in several instances when an author refers to the views propounded in the immediately preceding selection, there is a minimum of dialogue. One of the chief merits of the editor, in our opinion, is to have assembled in one volume a wide variety of views on the basic problems in aesthetics even though, as mentioned above, this is not an asset to the beginner. The selection of essays is soundly representative and well-supplemented by a solid bibliography at the end of each section.

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Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. **By T. D. Weldon. Second Edition. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958. Pp. xii + 331. $2.90.**

This is the second edition of the author's study of Kant's *Critique* first printed in 1945. Added years of reflection convinced Weldon that "a fairly comprehensive rewriting was needed if the book was to do the job of explaining how the Critical Philosophy is related to live philosophical issues." This second edition, like the first, is divided into three parts: Part I—a study of the historical antecedents of Kant's *Critique;* Part II—an analysis of the argument of the *Critique;* and, Part III—reflections on the Kantian "inner sense" and the "transcendental synthesis."

The original intent of the author was not to add to the imposing list of commentaries on the *Critique,* rather he wished to call attention to an aspect of Kant's thought very much in danger of being overlooked. A

true insight into Kant's thought, Weldon insists, is impossible without some understanding of the "physical and philosophical beliefs" of Kant's contemporaries and predecessors. In the first part of the present study the author discusses pertinent philosophical and scientific concepts found in the writings of Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, Hume, Wolff, Baumgarten and Meier; he is primarily interested in calling attention to possible direct and indirect impacts of these thinkers on the *Critique* of Kant. The readers of the *Critique*, warns Weldon, will do well to remember that Kant wrote his *Critique* in 1781, not in 1940. The sage of Koenigsberg was of a mind to do something about the pressing philosophical problems of his day, namely, the nature of the knowledge revealed by mathematics and the new experimental methods of inquiry, also the need to reconcile the new learning with the traditional theology and metaphysics.

Weldon's readers will probably agree with him that there is much nonsense concerning the nature of empirical science in the Clarke-Leibniz correspondence, but his assertion that nobody today questions the role of Kant in making clear the distinction between science and metaphysics or theology is subject to debate. And, what of Kant's solution of the second problem—the nature of scientific explanation itself? Weldon concedes this much—that Kant is in "a less secure position." Kant's insecurity is rooted in his failure to make his ideas clear; what Kant meant escapes the reader because Kant "was not clear himself." However, notes Weldon, Kant's distinction in the *Critique* between reality and appearance, "which is important and simple to use in ordinary language for the purposes of daily life," has unfortunately been converted by unsympathetic critics into a metaphysical phantasy. The "*Ding an sich*" is just a hopeless stumbling-block which Kant can neither justify nor abandon." So to interpret Kant, Weldon believes, is to do the author of the *Critique* an injustice, even though such an interpretation can be supported by many quotations. Kant's central contention, "however much it is obscured by his unsatisfactory linguistic apparatus," writes Weldon, "is his reiterated conviction that the distinction between things in themselves and phenomena is not a distinction between two types of entity but a distinction between two alternative ways of talking about the world." That Kant remained a professed realist, a realist in intent, can be granted; it is not quite so evident, however, that in his analysis of knowledge Kant did not espouse a formalism destructive of the onto-

logical validity of scientific judgments. Could it be that Weldon is unduly swayed by Kantian intentions?

Finally, what are we to think of Weldon's belief that Kant, notwithstanding his failure to make himself clear, "certainly laid the foundations of the philosophical analysis of scientific method which both philosophers and scientists today find usable as bases for further discussion and development"? Granted that Kant's analysis may have had the secondary effect "of encouraging scientists to construct deductive systems and to use theoretical concepts freely," one may rightly question the adequacy of the excessive formalism of Kantian thought as a basis for a truly realistic empirical science. A truly satisfactory methodology cannot be destructive of the scientist's insight into the nature of things.

Students of Kant's *Critique* will find Weldon's reflections both interesting and informative. Critics may not agree with many of our author's conclusions, but they will nevertheless readily grant that Weldon's approach to the mystery of Kant is most stimulating.

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Prudence, the First Cardinal Virtue. **By Josef Pieper. Translated from the German by Richard and Clara Winston. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1959. Pp. xiii + 96 . $2.75.**

This book is an introduction to the Thomistic teaching on the virtue of prudence. It seems to me that the essential doctrine is presented well and that it would be unfair for one who knows the subject to point to some of the more important nonessential features of this virtue which have been omitted. Even though the book has been translated from the German, the translation of Richard and Clara Winston is very intelligible, emphatic and quite idiomatic.

The book is divided into four short sections. In Sections One and Two, Pieper summarizes the traditional doctrine which establishes prudence as both an intellectual and moral virtue.

In Section One on "The First Cardinal Virtue," he pays too little attention perhaps to the transition from the virtues of the mind to the virtues of the will. He gives too much attention perhaps to explaining

what prudence is not, even though misconceptions of prudence are very common. He does a good job of equating prudence and goodness. In showing the relation between prudence and the other moral virtues, however, it seems to me that the author misses a good opportunity of demonstrating how conduct receives value or can be evaluated.

In Section Two where Pieper treats of "Knowledge of Reality and the Realization of the Good," he clearly summarizes prudence as the adequate judgment of means to be used toward the ultimate ends of life. He shows well how the prudent man squares off with reality—without wasting time on the pragmatist who is content to adjust himself to society or on the subjectivist who is pleased to adjust everything to himself. This section is a fine piece of positive exposition.

Section Three on "Delimitations and Contrasts" does not enjoy the compactness of the other parts of the book and is even unnecessarily repetitive in spots. This part is marked by some good insights into the significant consequences of the doctrine on the virtue of prudence. Since much of Catholic moral evaluation is still done by "rule of thumb" and since many of our schools of asceticism have sold themselves out to the scientific method and to the principle of "how much more can be done" rather than "how much better can it be done," I deem it proper to render this long quotation from page 57:

> The ethical deeds of man are not more or less fixed manual techniques, whose end is the shaping of some work, but steps toward self-realization. The human self, which grows toward perfection by accomplishing the good, is a "work" that surpasses all preconceived blueprints based upon man's own calculations. Ethical growth takes place in the course of our replies, appropriate to each given case, to the reality outside us which is not made by ourselves. The essence of that reality is the everchanging diversity of growth and decay, not permanent being (only God is who He is). This reply appropriate to each given case can be given only by the virtue of prudence. There is no "technique" of the good, no "technique" of perfection. . . .

The final section on "Prudence and Charity" is addressed to showing the pre-eminence of charity over prudence. It is satisfactory. Pieper does not make his summarizing attempt any easier by dragging in the etiological remark about all the things of this world being nought before God. Nor does he do his thesis any good by talking about "that higher and extraordinary form of prudence which holds the world in contempt" without recalling the accepted exegesis on the word "world."

The "Notes" at the end of the book are well chosen. They will

serve as an excellent refresher for those who have made a thorough study of the virtue of prudence.

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Désir naturel et béatitude chez saint Thomas. **By Venant Cauchy: Montreal-Paris-Saint Boniface: Fides, 1958. Pp. 126. Paper, $2.50.**

Venant Cauchy is convinced that a purely philosophical and natural ethics is not only possible but necessary in Thomism. He does not claim that such a discipline would be a perfect account of man's moral obligations but he insists that moral theology requires a well-developed moral philosophy. In taking this stand, he is opposing the well-known views of Jacques Maritain. Cauchy has presented his position in an English paper (*Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, 1955, pp. 206-218) and now he offers a fuller treatment in this French work. To my mind he is quite right.

This whole problem is but a part of the larger question of the relation of philosophy to theology in the thought of St. Thomas. It further involves the validity of the notion of Christian philosophy. The problem cannot be solved by the simple device of reading what Aquinas has to say about the terms, philosophy and theology. Much more pertinent are the ways in which St. Thomas faces key questions in detailed areas of his thinking. That of the natural desire for ultimate happiness is a critical one.

Cauchy's study has the merit of reviewing much of the secondary literature of this Thomistic problem. Of French writers, he summarizes and criticizes the positions of Brisebois, Garrigou-Lagrange, Grillon, A. Mansion, Maritain and Roland-Gosselin. Among English studies covered are works by Buckley, Klubertanz, O'Connor, O'Mahony and Pegis. The reports of the varying positions of these authors are useful and accurate, though no summary can reproduce the nuances of the original interpretations.

Cauchy's interpretation is not a simple one. It is best presented in his eighth chapter, where he stoutly maintains that there is a natural end for man, that this end is imperfect in comparison with the supernatural end to which man has been elevated, and that there are, in some sense, two ends for man. Oddly, this was the view of Suarez; and

Cauchy seems to be much influenced by the works of Cathrein in which a modified Suarezianism is found. This is not written in criticism of Cauchy; it is possible that Suarez is right on this matter.

On page 85, Cauchy cites a controlling text (*De Veritate*, XXVII, 2, c.) which I give here in a very literal translation:

> Now by his nature man is proportioned to an end for which he has a natural appetite, and he is able to gain this end by means of his natural powers. This end is a contemplation of divine things, such as is possible to man according to the capacity of nature. The philosophers have placed the ultimate happiness of man in this end. However, there is an end for which man is prepared by God, which surpasses the proportion of human nature. It is eternal life which consists in the vision of God through His essence. This end exceeds the proportion of every created nature and stands as connatural with God alone.

Later (I-II, 61, 1, c.) St. Thomas says much the same thing, speaking rather formally and stating that there is a "*duplex hominis beatitudo sive felicitas.*" One is natural and the other is quite beyond nature. These and other similar texts provide a solid background for Cauchy's position. Some difficulty remains, of course. The natural end is included in the greater perfection of the supernatural one; in this sense, they are not different ends. Implicitly, Cauchy admits, there is in man a natural desire of a happiness which cannot be achieved apart from the beatific vision. As Maritain has pointed out, it is in the abstract that we see two ends for man. But then, do we ever understand man, in moral philosophy or theology, except in the abstract? Has contemporary existentialism projected even some Thomists into the hopeless position of trying to make a science out of non-scientific matter, out of the concrete feelings and existence of the individual person?

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Ramus and Talon Inventory. **Edited by Walter J. Ong S. J. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958. Pp. 558, with index. $10.00.**

Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue. **By Walter J. Ong, S. J. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958. Pp. xix + 408, with index. $10.00.**

As recently as 1956, in commenting on a Renaissance library catalogue (that of a seventeenth-century Cambridge M. A.), a Renaissance scholar wrote: "One wonders, for example, what set of intellectual circumstances produced a library in which one third of the books were works of Peter Ramus and his opponents."[1] Such a wonder is no longer possible, and in charting one of the dark and stormy seas of Renaissance thought, Fr. Ong has significantly modified our concepts of the movement of philosophical ideas in Western thought. We now know (to shift the figure) what the set of intellectual circumstances was that made Ramus so bright a star in the sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries.

The Inventory

This is an inventory of the published works of Peter Ramus and of his literary associate Omer Talon (or Audomarus Talaeus), an inventory in which nearly 800 editions and around 1100 printings are listed with locations of copies in well over 100 European libraries (including Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, as well as British, French and German), as well as the American libraries at Harvard, Yale, Columbia, St. Louis and Princeton Universities, and the Boston and New York Public Libraries and the Boston Athenaeum. It is an immense labor, and one must be grateful for such booty from so long a trek through so many libraries.

The larger portion is of course the Short-Title Inventory of the published works of Ramus, and it is a prime finding-list for rare Ramus texts. Checking all CtY references (his symbol for Yale), I note that Ong lists thirty-two for Yale, of which he has individually examined three copies, according to his own procedure of italicizing the library symbol (two of these are unique, the other is one of two copies in the U. S.). It is no reproof of the Herculean bibliographical

[1] This, a library of 46 books, about one-third of which were works by Ramus and his opponents, is listed in *Library Catalogues of the English Renaissance by* Sears Jayne (Berkeley, 1956) p. 52.

labors of the Inventory to note that there are corrigenda and addenda to be made (as he himself predicted in the Introduction to the Inventory, pp. [11-3]): to nos. 582, 604, 714, and 724, for all of which Yale possesses a copy. A more important addendum is #601 at Yale; it is bound with #588, where it is noted that Yale possesses a copy but #601 is not noted.[2]

(I will not note other Notre Dame copies, but it is worth recording that there is a copy at Notre Dame of Ong #587, for which a single copy at the Bibliothèque Nationale is listed.)

There is, finally, an Agricola Check List: A Short-Title Check List of Some Printed Editions and of Some Printed Compendia of Rudolph Agricola's *Dialectical Invention* (De Inventione Dialectica); over 40 editions of this work preceded Ramus' of 1543-55. And just as Ramus superseded Agricola (of whom there are only nine editions after 1550), "in a somewhat similar way Ramus was later to be relegated to oblivion by Descartes" (p. [536]).

The bibliographical value of this Inventory is very great, primarily of course in clarifying many cloudy bibliographical relationships and in aiding the identification of editions, which has been until now an enormously difficult problem facing every scholar who dealt with any Ramistic problems. There are other contributions, briefly summarized in the Introduction: various false attributions are cleared up, and the question of the authorship of the *Rhetoric* is given full discussion for the first time; further, the Inventory lays out the lines of Ramus' influence on such men as the educational reformer Comenius (Comensky). The appendix on 'Ramistic Controversies' provides much-needed information on the details and sequences of the several Ramistic controversies. In that appendix, based on and supplementing the Inventory, nearly 400 Ramists, anti-Ramists, and semi- and pseudo-Ramists are listed. (In passing one may note that the seventeenth-century Englishman John Hart is listed as a weak semi-Ramist [(S)?], but the fact that the frontispiece of his *A Godly Sermon of Peter's Repentance*, 2d ed. [London, 1663—Yale copy] is a portrait of Ramus would indicate rather stronger Ramistic sympathies.)

Unfortunately there is no index to the commentaries upon the indi-

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[2] Ong notes (*Inventory*, p. 361) that according to (*Répertoire des ouvrages pédagogiques . . .*), the Bibliothèque de la Ville at Chartres had a copy of a 1561 Paris edition of this work, the *Introduction to Mathematics*; but there is apparently no other reference to a 1561 edition.

vidual entries—thus one comes by accident upon such information as the note (p. [156]) that one copy was apparently John Rainolds', who exercised such an influence upon English thought and prose style and seems to have shaped Lyly's Euphuism, or that the Library of Congress has Thomas Jefferson's copy of Ramus' *Rhetoricis elementa* (1712-#178a). Some confusion is created by the library symbols—e. g., there are Cambridge University libraries with symbols beginning Ct (Cte and Cth), as does Yale (CtY)—and readers are likely to experience difficulties in working back and forth from the Inventory Contents.

But these are quite minor complaints to lodge against so splendid a bibliographical tool, which at once commands a place on the shelf of Renaissance bibliographers and students of Renaissance thought, as well as of all historians of logic and rhetoric.

Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue

Issued concurrently with the *Inventory*, this book rests upon the bibliographical foundations of that guide and checklist; and (the author writes in the Foreword) "this book is an attempt to study Ramism in its historical context." Evaluation of the work must therefore weigh the relating of Ramism to its historical context, and the precision and sensitivity with which that complex relationship is handled, as well as the analysis and presentation of Ramistic ideas and the total structure of his thought.

The book is disposed into four parts: *Issues, Background, Ramism,* and *Sequel;* and I propose to comment on these four books each in turn.

Issues (*I*) begins with what is called Ramism in Intellectual Tradition, developing the relative newness of interest in Ramus in the twentieth century and pointing chiefly to Morison and Miller of Harvard as the generators of interest in Ramism, from 1935 on.

Ramism, Ong writes (p. 7), "is not properly a philosophy or a theology or a type of classical humanism or a literary school," and the fact that Ramus' influence was so largely in school or university texts and perpetuated in the anonymous tradition of textbooks is in large part the cause of Ramus' curious fortunes since the seventeenth century; another is the fact that Ramus largely wrote in the universal language of Renaissance scholarship and letters, Latin—and this of course keeps him at a remove from all but a very small minority of intellectuals today (and even from most Renaissance scholars)—Ong's trenchant comments on the modern falling away from the Latin tradition are

developed more fully in his wittily challenging essay on 'Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite' in *Studies in Philology* (1959). Like so much of the intellectual movement of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, then, Ramism is "an international cultural phenomenon."

In chapter II, 'Vectors in Ramus' Career' are treated the events of his life as professor and educational reformer at Paris. Here questions of pedagogical exigency press forward, and here Ong comments that "it is only after the pedagogical build-up of the Middle Ages that the crucial question for philosophy becomes not, Is it true? but Is it teachable?" Reform was of course everywhere in the sixteenth-century air, and Ramus rode on the wave of the future. There were indeed currents and cross-currents of all kinds and combinations: a chapter-title like 'Vectors in Ramus' Career' well suggests the concept of vectors and one kind of analysis most valuable for such a period.

Under 'Structure of Reform' (ch. III), a sub-chapter treats of Ramus and Italian Humanism, and at this point some vague disquietudes about the use of the terms *humanism* and *humanist* come to the forefront. Earlier (p. 27) Ong had equated humanism and eloquence, and on p. 49 he writes that "in a very real sense Italian humanism stood for a rhetorically centered culture opposed to the dialectically or logically centered culture of North Europe." But surely this is too much of a simplification (or, in effect, of a conclusion resting upon more than one simplification), for clearly Erasmus embodies the humanism of the North, and all of his movement is toward rhetoric rather than logic (if, for the moment, we can ask a single formularizing to serve for so complex a figure): so later (p. 291) Ong speaks of 'the rhetorical approach to life' as the way of Isocrates and Cicero and Quintilian and Erasmus. But to the definition and sense of humanism, and to the unconsidered problem of the place of humanism in the total structure of Renaissance thought and letters, I wish to return later.

Book III is concerned directly with Ramism, and the nature of the Ramist rhetoric, Ong argues, must be seen in terms of its renunciation of invention and its devotion to expression:

> . . . Ramist rhetoric is a rhetoric which has not only no invention but also no judgment or arrangement of its own. The field of activity covered by the terms judgment or arrangement (*dispositio*) has likewise been dissociated from voice by being isolated from rhetoric and committed to Ramist dialectic or logic. In the process, judgment—which necessarily

bespeaks utterance, an assent or a dissent, a *saying* of yes or no—simply disappears, and with it all rational interest in the psychological activities which such a term covers. Arrangement or 'positioning' (*dispositio*) secures exclusive rights as the only other phenomenon besides invention which occurs in intellectual activity, and as the sole principle governing the organization of speech. Unlike judgment, which cannot be conceived of independently of some reference to saying, to utterance, and thus to the oral and aural world of personalities, 'arrangement' can be conceived of simply by analogy with visually perceived spatial patterns. With all rhetorical organization governed from outside rhetoric by this 'arrangement' (syllogism and method), the role of voice and person-to-person relationships in communication is reduced to a new minimum. When, finally, in this development memory also goes insofar as it is aural, and is replaced—again, at least in theory—by the 'natural' order in things, which means, as has been seen, almost any order, however arbitrary, picturable in a dichotomized diagram for the visual imagination, all that is left to this rhetoric is style and delivery. Of these the more vocal, delivery, is regularly underdeveloped or totally neglected, proving in effect uncongenial to Ramist theory, and style itself, as has been seen, is reduced further in terms which can be somehow visually conceived. . . . (p. 289)

(The McLuhan-Ong dyad of "audile" and "visile," of time and space, is crucial to the structure of this argument.) And Ramist dialectic remains, in effect (Ong continues),

a rhetorical instrument, since the principles of organization it proposes can in the large be given no really formal logical structure. But in the Ramist account of rhetoric, and of the world of voice in which it reportedly operated, the art has been made over by analogy with the silent world of vision. Ideologically, the world of sound has yielded, unwittingly but quite effectively, to the world of space. (p. 290)

We move in the last book, titled Sequel, to the diffusion of Ramism, and we can here quote Ong's summary statement:

The examination which the present book has undertaken reveals Ramism as a development in man's view of his own intellectual activity and of the universe which has its origins in the interaction of humanism and scholasticism. The internal structure and development of the Ramist outlook advertises particularly the mechanistic, quantitative bent in the scholastic mind, and calls attention to the importance of the scholastic arts course (and, indirectly, of the medical course) as against the scholastic theological course in the development of the sensibility of Western man. The structure and evolution of Ramism also points up this same bent in the topical logic tradition encouraged by humanism, and shows the way in which this topical tradition, imported to Paris via the Rhineland—for the contact between Italian humanism and Ramus is in no significant way direct—reacted with the scholastic heritage to produce

an even more quantified, diagrammatic approach to reality and to the mind itself. (p. 306)

Ong develops a consideration of the culture of the middle ages as more of a manuscript culture than that of antiquity to point towards what is, he asserts, "perhaps the most central development in the medieval preparation for the Gutenberg era: that of the highly quantified logic typified in the *Summulae logicales* of Peter of Spain." With considerable justice Peter of Spain is throughout taken as typical of medieval logic, 'the highly quantified logic'; but it is, I think, necessary to point out that on such a key issue as the excluding of predicates from supposition, St. Vincent Ferrer, O.P., sided with Burleigh against Peter of Spain, Ockham and Albert of Saxony.[3]

This is not (nor does it pretend to be) a history of medieval and renaissance logic. Thus one cannot expect to find mention of even such important works as the *Regulae Solvendi Sophismata* of William Heytesbury—a work apparently not printed in Renaissance England—although Heytesbury's work points up the significant relation between logic and mathematics and physics at fourteenth-century Oxford and the extent to which (as Curtis Wilson has recently shown) Oxford logicians were treating problems of motion and mathematical limits. So too, one misses some fifteenth-century logics—those of Paulus Venetus and Leydius, for instance[4]—and nowhere do I find sufficient consideration of the possibility of availability of medieval logics to Ramus and his contemporaries, for others besides Peter of Spain were known to the sixteenth century only in manuscript. It must be concluded that we still do not sufficiently understand the full achievement of that logic which preceded the sixteenth-century development: instead we see only the chimera which they saw and against which they rebelled.

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[3] This treatise, one of our "rather few printed texts of medieval logic," was written by St. Vincent Ferrer, O.P., at Valencia in 1372 "and was printed for the first time in *Oeuvres de Saint Vincent Ferrier* (Paris, 1909) by Père Fages, O.P." Ivo Thomas, O.P., "Saint Vincent Ferrer's *De Suppositionibus*," *Dominican Studies*, V (1952) 88-102.

[4] The *Logica* of Paulus Venetus was printed in Venice, 1475, and Milan, 1484; the *Expositio in Analytica Posteriora Aristotelis* in Venice, 1477. See Menghus Blanchellus, *Super Logicam Pauli Veneti expositio et questiones* (Trevison, 1476). Hain-Copinger 12511, 3227.

The first edition of Leydius, *Epitomata siue reparationes logicae veteris et nouae Aristotelis*, was printed in 1496, another in 1500.

Much is made of the revolt of the humanists against Peter of Spain,[5] but first the place of humanism in the larger movement of ideas must be made clear, and to do that we must establish the concept of certain changes of phase in the intellectual life of Europe. As Kristeller has so trenchantly described this change,

> In medieval Europe, Platonism as modified by Augustine was the prevailing trend in philosophy and theology up to the twelfth century, and remained an important secondary current long thereafter. Aristotelianism on the other hand became predominant in the thirteenth century, and retained much of its hold up to the sixteenth century and even afterwards. Yet from the fifteenth century on both Platonism and Aristotelianism entered a novel phase under the influence of the new humanistic movement. Both currents, to be sure, continued the preceding traditions of the Middle Ages, but at the same time they formulated doctrines in novel terms and thus represent new stages in the history of those traditions. . . .[6]

In the universities scholasticism continued to dominate the curriculum well into the seventeenth century;[7] humanism is chiefly to be found among the men of letters like Erasmus, among jurists and public officials like Peter Gilles (and Thomas More): it tends to be (from the point of view of the sixteenth-century scholastic within the university) *extra muros*, though this generalization too breaks down. Humanism is not the only major current of Renaissance thought, though it is, I think, the dominant; nor is it to be thought of as the whole of Renaissance cultural activity. But it was in its own day complex, and many years of differing approaches have further complicated the term until it would now seem mandatory to use it only in its historical sense as it was understood by the Italians from the time of Petrarch on, and by most of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: the *studia humanitatis* embracing a whole range of scholarly disciplines—grammar,

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[5] The revolt goes back at least to Coluccio Salutati's letter of 1390 to an Ockhamist doctor: "The truth cannot be in all these distinctions, questions, and suppositions. Take away the sophistic dressing, give us back a knowledge of reality. . . . Turn above all things to poetry, whose seal is higher than that of logical knowledge, and alone is able to speak of God." G. de Santillana, *The Age of Adventure* (New York, 1956) p. 12.

[6] P. Kristeller, "Problems and Aspects of the Renaissance," in *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome, 1956) p. 282—see my review of this important work in *Neo-Latin News*, XVI (1958) 102.

[7] See W. Costello, *The Scholastic Curriculum at Early Seventeenth-Century Cambridge* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), reviewed in this journal, XXXIII (1959) 387-90.

rhetoric, poetry and moral philosophy history to a lesser degree but not mathematics or science)—and the study of each of these included the ancient writers in Latin and to a lesser extent Greek; it was essentially concerned with what we would now call literature.[8] (I do not therefore see how the Jesuit fathers can be equated with the humanists, or any medieval theologians or canonists, no matter how illustrious.)

After the dominance of such Italians as Valla, humanism ceased to be a centrifuge—and for the period from about 1480 to about 1535, no machine symbol could serve for the extraordinary feeling of life, of growth, and of community. Of the too-little known Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples More had the highest praise in his great letter of 1515 to Dorp:

> Those of our nation possessed of finer talent and sounder judgment follow him as the restorer of true dialectics and true philosophy, especially Aristotle's, and consequently Paris seems to be returning thanks to us for a gift received long ago, since he is the means of reviving among us the branches of learning which they received from us at the start.[9]

To be sure, More (like other humanists) fiercely attacked the *Summulae logicales* (there is a play in More's phrase of *Parvorum Logicalium*)—not only because Peter of Spain so dominated the arts course, but even more because so rigid a formularizing falsified (More thought) true dialectics and philosophy. Again in the Dorp letter he writes of a syllogism that this "is not a syllogism for the reason that it is properly constructed in accordance with the precepts of dialectics and fashioned as a *barbara* . . . but because reason, which made such a rule for that very purpose, tells us that the conclusion follows from the premises."[10]

In these sentences of More run, I feel, the spirit of humanism and the source of its revolt against the authoritative logic of Peter of Spain. This is not the humanism "curiously committed to the written word of antiquity (and hence commonly confused in its own age with

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[8] I am here following Kristeller, *op. cit.*, pp. 262 ff. For a detailed study of humanism in 15th Century England, see Roberto Weiss' book of that title.

[9] In E. Rogers, *The Correspondence of Sir Thomas More* (Princeton, 1947) p. 36. (I am grateful to be able to quote from the translation of Marcus Haworth, S. J., being prepared at Yale.)

[10] Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

another related phenomenon, Bible Protestantism, which committed itself in a similar way, but on religious grounds) . . ." (p. 309). More, whom I take as the greatest of sixteenth-century English humanists, would not have understood the phrase 'curiously committed'; much more would he have accepted P. S. Allen's phrase describing Erasmus, to serve 'God by advancing knowledge.' But the story of how these humanists confronted the question of relating their learning to the Christian revelation needs fuller telling,[11] and for this we must make better use of the magisterial scholarship of Kristeller especially on the interaction of religious as well as philosophical and literary currents and influences.[12]

The importance of these two volumes cannot be doubted: for the first time we have the history of Ramus and of Ramistic ideas clearly traced, and in some of the pages of discourse on that history there are brilliant insights into such problems as the role of logic in the academic curriculum (and, indeed, of the curriculum and potentials and responsibilities). If, as I would judge, the book has fallen somewhat short of its goal of studying Ramism in its historical context—particularly by its incomplete view of humanism—nonetheless the treatment of Ramus' career and of the course of Ramistic ideas is splendidly documented and, in the main, excitingly discoursed.

Much depends from the overriding notion of spacetime dichotomizing, a notion not fully grounded in the present work but promised to be developed in a future study. Yet it must finally be declared that in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* we are brought closer to an understanding of what it means to be post-Gutenberg, and post-Ramus, men.

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[11] E. Harbison has presented a challenging view of the problem in *The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation* (New York, 1956).

[12] Kristeller, "Lay Religious Traditions and Florentine Platonism," *loc. cit.*, pp. 99-122.

Book Brevities

Experience and the Analytic. By Alan Pasch. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958. Pp. xvii + 275, with index. $6.50.

This is another in the series of recent writings on the distinction between a priori and a posteriori propositions. The author's conclusion is one of "pragmatic reconstruction," where the difference between formal and factual propositions depends on cognitive context. In Pasch's view, the distinction between the analytic and synthetic cannot be an absolute one because there are no known propositions which can function as a priori in all contexts.

Naturphilosophie in 19. Jahrhundert. By Gerhard Hennemann. Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1959. Pp. 122 DM. 9.80.

The author's theme in this short work is a presentation of the influence of science, especially physics, on 19th century philosophy. Although too often based on secondary sources, the book sketches out the relations between science and the idealism at the beginning of the century and between science and the positivism at the end. Even the socalled romantics are shown to have been influenced by science. The length of the book does not permit the full elaboration which the author's theme requires.

Bibliografia plosofica italiana. Anno 1957. Brescia: Morcelliana, 1959. Pp. 199, with index. Lire 2000.

This is a continuation of a series published annually since 1949. It is under the general editorship of V. Padovani and M. Sciacca. There are five sections: reports, dictionaries, texts, and bibliographies; congresses; editions of texts; the history of philosophy; and philosophy. There are 2947 entries.

The Golden Age of American Philosophy. Selected and edited with an introduction and notes by Charles Frankel. New York: George Brazillier, 1960. Pp. viii + 534. $7.50.

One would certainly agree that the editor has selected authors whose works would provide an image of "the golden age" of distinctively American philosophy. The authors included in this anthology are

Wright, Peirce, James, Royce, Santayana, Dewey, Perry, Lewis, and M. Cohen. Except perhaps in the case of Royce, whose only substantial work reprinted here are selections from *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, Frankel has managed to present the central views of his authors in the materials he has chosen. For purposes of creating a dialogue within his selections, it would have been good if Cohen had been represented by his famous critique of Dewey. It would have been valuable also, and for dialogue purposes again, if Frankel had given us an index since most of the selections speak to many common themes.

Language, Truth and Petory. The Aquinas Lecture, 1960. By Victor M. Hamm. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1960. Pp. 74. $2.50.

The title of this lecture was deliberately chosen to parallel Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* where poetry is relegated to mere emotive expression. Hamm is also concerned to reject the "mythologist" theory which would turn poetry into obscurantism. He ably argues the Aristotelian view that poetry, in its own way, is as St. Thomas later put it, a form of *doctrina*. But the poet is not a scientist. "The truth the poet is primarily concerned with, then, is the truth of his work, its conformity to his artistic intention . . . (p. 67)." Poetry is imitative, and as such it need be only plausible.

Oase des Glücks. By Eugen Fink. Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber. Pp. 52 DM. 4.80.

This little work bears the subtitle, "Thoughts toward an Ontology of Play." Fink, of course, employs the method of phenomenology at which he has proven himself so adept, and reaches several important conclusions. First, play is revealed as an activity for its own sake (oasis) in an otherwise work-a-day world. Secondly, play is social, for even when fellow players are not real, they are present in an imaginary way. Thirdly, play reveals our human "limit" situation, to borrow Jaspers' term. One reason is that play has a make-believe character. "To the play world always belong real things—but in part they have the character of ontic appearance, in part they are clothed with subjective appearance produced from the human soul (p. 48)." Play thus takes us back to the fundamental problems of being and the naught, appearance and becoming. Here Fink leaves us, with a statement that he does not intend to go further into these problems in the present book.

The Structure of Scientific Thought. An Introduction to Philosophy of Science. Edited by Edward H. Madden. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1960. Pp. ix + 380, with index. $5.00.

This book, simpler in the subject matter selected than is the case with the Feigl-Brodbeck and Wiener anthologies, is intended as a textbook, contains forty-one selections arranged under the following seven headings: making sense of science; philosophical problems of physics; biology and the sciences of man; the meaning of "cause" and "law"; probability notions; the riddle of induction; science and values. Each section is preceded by a stage-setting introduction by Madden. One can always quarrel with the selections of an anthologist. In this case, there is a notable lack of the recent work in the history of science which has shed a good deal of light on its philosophy. Moreover, the failure to include a sample of the Thomistic position on the general problem treated slants the book away from the use it might otherwise have for Catholic college teaching. Even if the author does not want to espouse Thomism, he ought at least to give students a chance to see it, along with other philosophies. The vital Thomist is guilty of no such exclusivism regarding other philosophies like those otherwise so well sampled in this book.

Books Received

Abercrombie, M. L. *The Anatomy of Judgment.* New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1960. Pp. 156, with index. $4.50.

Arnold, Magda B. *Emotion and Personality.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1960. Two Volumes. Vol. I, pp. xiv + 296, with index. Vol. II, pp. xvi + 430, with index. $7.50, each volume.

Barker, Sir Ernest. *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle.* New York: Dover Publications, 1960. Pp. xxii + 559, with index. Paper, $1.85.

Blake, Ralph M.; Ducasse, Curt J.; and Madden, Edward H. *Theories of Scientific Method: The Renaissance Through the Nineteenth Century.* Edited by Edward H. Madden. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1960. Pp. iv + 346, with index. $6.50.

Blakney, Raymond B., editor, translator and commentator. *An Immanuel Kant Reader.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. Pp. xvii + 290, with index. $5.00.

Blewett, John, S. J., editor. *John Dewey: His Thought and Influence.* Foreword by John S. Brubacher. New York: Fordham University Press, 1960. Pp. xiv + 242. $5.00.

Bouyer, Louis. *Christian Initiation.* New York: Macmillan Company, 1960. Pp. 148. $3.50.

Braithwaite, R. B. *Scientific Explanation.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. Pp. x + 374, with index. Paper, $1.85.

Bridgman, P. W. *The Logic of Modern Physics.* New York: Macmillan Company, 1960. Pp. xiv + 228, with index. Paper, $1.25.

Bronowski, J. and Mazlish, Bruce. *The Western Intellectual Tradition.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. Pp. xviii + 522, with index. $7.50.

Caponigri, A. Robert, editor. *Modern Catholic Thinkers.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. Pp. xvi + 636. $15.00.

Coleburt, Russell. *The Search for Values.* New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1960. Pp. 135, with index. $3.00.

Copleston, Frederick, S. J. *A History of Philosophy,* Vol. VI. Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1960. Pp. ix + 509, with index. $4.50.

de Broglie, Louis. ***Physics and Microphysics.*** New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. Pp. 286, with index. Paper, $1.50.

Dewey, John. ***The Quest for Certainty.*** New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1960. Pp. 318, with index. Paper, $1.25.

De Wulf, Maurice. ***The System of Thomas Aquinas.*** New York: Dover Publications, 1960. Pp. 151. Paper, $1.25.

Diamond, Malcolm, L. ***Martin Buber: Jewish Existentialist.*** New York: Oxford University Press, 1960. Pp. ix + 240, with index. $4.50.

Duhamel, P. Albert, editor. ***Essays in the American Catholic Tradition.*** New York: Rinehart and Company, 1960. Pp. xiii + 271. Paper, $1.75.

Forest, Aimé. ***Orentazioni Metafisiche.*** Milan, Marzorati, 1960. Pp. 139. Paper, L. 1,000.

Gilby, Thomas, translator. ***Saint Thomas Aquinas, Philosophical Texts.*** New York: Oxford University Press, 1960. Pp. xxii + 405, with index. Paper, $1.95.

Gillispie, Charles Coulston. ***The Edge of Objectivity.*** Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960. Pp. vii + 562, with index. $7.50.

Halberstadt, William H. ***An Introduction to Modern Logic.*** New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. Pp. xii + 221, with index. $5.00.

Hall, Everett W. ***Philosophical Systems, a Categorial Analysis.*** Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960. Pp. x + 180, with index. $4.00.

Hollander, Lee M., translator. ***Selections from the Writings of Kierkegaard.*** New York: Doubleday Books, Inc., 1960. Pp. 259, with index. Paper, $.95.

Kahn, Charles H. ***Anaximander and the Origins of Greek Cosmology.*** New York: Columbia University Press, 1960. Pp. xii + 249, with index. $6.50.

Keilbach, Welhelm. ***Einübung ins Philosophische Denken.*** Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1960. Pp. 180, with index. 9.80 DM.

Lebacqz, Joseph, S. J. ***Libre Arbitre et Jugement.*** Bruges, Belgium: Desclée de Brouwer, 1960. Pp. 164, with index. Paper, 20 E. B.

Lescoe, Francis J., translator. ***Saint Thomas Aquinas' Treatise on Separate Substances.*** West Hartford, Conn.: Saint Joseph College, 1959. Pp. x + 138, with index. Paper, $2.00.

Lewy, Guenter. ***A Study of the Political Philosophy of Juan De***

Mariana, S. J. Geneva: Librairie E. Droz, 1960. Pp. 199, with index. Paper, *

Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.* New York: Dover Publications, 1960. Two volumes. Vol. I, Pp. cxl + 535. Vol. II, Pp. vi + 495, with index. Paper, $2.25, each volume.

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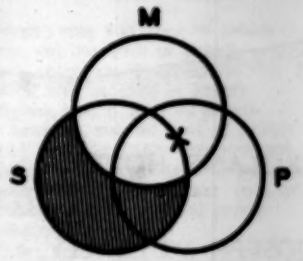

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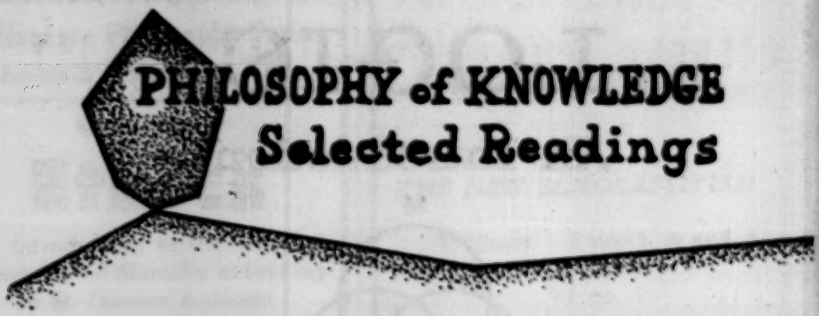

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